Gender balanced or gender biased? : an examination of news coverage of male and female governors

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GENDER BALANCED OR GENDER BIASED?
AN EXAMINATION OF NEWS COVERAGE OF MALE AND FEMALE GOVERNORS

by

Lauren Bryant

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ABSTRACT

Male and female candidates are on an uneven political playing field with women continually disadvantaged in terms of the news media coverage they receive. Research has shown that female candidates receive more negative coverage and coverage based upon traditional gender stereotypes and role expectations of women in our culture. However, what is less clear is the type of news coverage women receive after Election Day. As more and more women are elected, it becomes increasingly important to examine the coverage they receive while in office. This study employed a content analysis to examine the differences in the news coverage of male and female governors throughout their tenure.

Overall, my findings suggest that the majority of news coverage for both male and female governors was neutral coverage that focused on issue discussions. However, when the coverage strayed from these prescribed journalistic standards, important differences were found. In terms of the quantity of coverage, female governors receive less news article coverage, less prominently placed coverage, and more opinionated coverage than male governors. In terms of the quality of coverage, the news coverage of female governors was more likely to be negative. In addition, the coverage of female governors was less likely to focus on issues and more likely to contain personal, gendered, and strategy frames than the coverage of their male counterparts. Overall, patterns of gender bias were evident in the coverage of female governors.

Previous research suggests that the news media presents obstacles for women while running for political office, and it appears that these barriers are not entirely removed once in office. The news media activated gender roles, discussed appearance and personality, and wrote more opinionated articles for female governors than males. Even though women are winning races and occupying positions that have been traditionally male dominated, cultural stereotypes
about the role of women appear in the news coverage of female governors. The results suggest that gender balanced coverage has yet to be fully achieved.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the United States, the dominance of men in political office would seem to be politics as usual. In 2010, women made up 50.8% of all Americans (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.) and yet their share of the population is not reflected in their share of elected political office. Currently, women hold only 18% of the seats in the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives and 23% of the statewide elective executive office positions across the country (Center for American Women and Politics, 2014). According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (n.d.), the United States is ranked 83rd in the world in terms of female political representation.

In an attempt to explain the low levels of female representation in American politics, researchers have devoted considerable attention to how the news media covers male and female candidates. This research has shown that male and female candidates are on an uneven political playing field with women continually disadvantaged in terms of the news media coverage they receive. Research has shown that female candidates compared with male candidates receive more negative coverage and coverage based upon traditional gender stereotypes and role expectations of women in our culture (Aday & Devitt, 2001; Anderson, 2002; Banwart et al., 2003; Bode & Hennings, 2012; Bystrom et al., 2001; Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Devitt, 2002; Falk, 2008; Heldman et al., 2005; Scharrer, 2002).

However, despite the existence of a predominantly male political sphere with news coverage favoring male candidates, women do run for political office and women do win. Even though women continue to constitute a small proportion of elected positions compared with their male counterparts, their political presence has continued to
steadily increase over the past several decades. In the 100th Congress (1987-1989), women comprised only 4.7% of Senate and House seats compared with 18% in the 113th Congress (2013-2015). In 1969, only 6.6% of statewide elective executive offices were held by women. This number has jumped to 23.3% in 2014 (Center for American Women and Politics, 2014). In both 2004 and 2007, nine women simultaneously served as governor, the largest number of female governors to serve at any one time (National Women’s Political Caucus, n.d.). In 2014, women held 20.8% of state senate seats and 25.4%, of the state house seats which is a fivefold increase in the number of women serving in state legislatures since 1971 (Center for American Women and Politics, 2014). Although the political playing field in the United States is far from even, women are being elected to political office in greater numbers than ever before.

However, what is less clear is the type of news media coverage these women receive once they are elected to office. As more and more women become elected, it becomes increasingly important to examine the coverage they receive while in office. How the news media portraists these women often translates into how voters feel about them. Thus, how journalists cover women in elected positions can influence their success at re-election, their likelihood of seeking higher political positions at the end of their terms, and the chances that other women will follow in their footsteps. All of these achievements would help to create a more level political playing field between men and women.

Very little research has analyzed the coverage men and women receive once they transition into office. It appears that the coverage of male and female candidates is much more interesting to scholars than the coverage of male and female office holders (Larson,
2001). However, I argue that such research only represents half of the story. Equally important is the coverage of politicians once in office.

The transition of female politicians into traditionally male dominated political office represents a unique opportunity for scientific inquiry. The relationship between candidates and the public is different from the relationship between elected officials and the public. Once a candidate is elected, the expectation is that he or she will act on the public’s behalf as well as in a way that is consistent with the view of the idealized public official. As a woman transitions from a candidate to a political official, the public must accept the conflicting roles of a woman occupying a high-profile elected position in the traditionally male dominated public sphere (Dabbous & Ladley, 2010).

Even though the news media strive for fairness and objectivity in their reporting, they are not immune from also needing to accept these conflicting roles (Dabbous & Ladley, 2010). Journalists, like the public, are affected by the stereotypes of our culture (Braden, 1996; Heldman et al., 2005). Both the news media and the public must shift their gendered expectations, expectations that are based upon the broader view of women in American society, as these women transition into traditionally male dominated positions (Dabbous & Ladley, 2010). In addition, the public and the news media must continually negotiate these shifts in gendered expectations as the female politician carries out her responsibilities and duties as a woman in the masculine sphere throughout her term in office.

Prior research on the effects of differential coverage of male and female candidates illustrates how such coverage can negatively impact the female politician and her agenda (Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993; Kahn, 1992; Kropf & Boiney, 2001).
Differential news coverage based upon traditional gender stereotypes impacts the public’s perception of a candidate’s viability. Thus, coverage that focuses on issues and leadership qualities for male candidates and the personality traits, appearance, and family life for female candidates could lead voters to form different evaluations of the viability of these individuals simply based upon news media coverage. The same would likely hold true for female politicians. If the coverage of elected officials is also gendered in nature with a reliance upon traditional gendered stereotypes, such coverage could impact the public’s perception of that official and specifically how well she is performing in office.

**Overview of study**

Previous research has found that male and female candidates are treated differently by the news media and that this differential treatment influences voters’ evaluations of these women. However, little is known about how the news media cover these men and women after Election Day. The purpose of this study was to provide an in-depth examination of an often overlooked area of research within the political communication field. My goal was to determine if differences exist in the coverage of male and female governors after they assume office and how this coverage changes during the course of their tenure.

**Research hypotheses and questions**

In order to accomplish my goals, several research hypotheses and questions were developed. The first three hypotheses are designed to compare the differences in the quantity of coverage between male and female governors. They include whether these women received less news coverage, less prominently placed coverage, and more opinion
coverage than their male counterparts. The remaining four hypotheses were developed to consider differences in the quality or substance of coverage. They include whether the coverage of female governors was more negative, whether females were less likely to receive issue coverage, if issue domains fall along stereotypical gender lines, and if the coverage of female governors was more likely to contain personal, gendered, and strategy frames. Finally, I proposed two research questions based upon transition periods that reflect changes in a governor’s status while in office. These periods include their transitions from governor-elect, through their first term, their re-election campaigns, and the lame duck period. The first research question is if differences existed in how male and female governors were framed in news articles during these transition periods, and the second is if differences existed in the tone used during these same periods.

Methods

This study employed a content analysis of news article coverage of male and female U.S. governors. Included in the sample of governors were 15 females and 15 males over a 10 year period. A sample of news articles was pulled from each governor from the largest or second largest circulating newspaper of their state. Coding categories were developed that would test the research hypotheses and address the research questions. This study contained two forms of data. The first was basic demographic data that was coded at the level of the article. The second form of data was coded at the level of the paragraph and included whether the paragraph was about the governor, the tone of the paragraph, and the frame of the paragraph.
Results

The results of this study suggest important differences exist in the news article coverage of male and female governors. In terms of the quantity of coverage, female governors receive less news article coverage, less prominently placed coverage, and more opinionated coverage than male governors. In terms of the quality of coverage, the news coverage of female governors was more likely to be negative. In addition, the coverage of female governors was less likely to focus on issues and more likely to contain personal, gendered, and strategy frames. The results from the content analysis suggest that gender balanced coverage has yet to be fully achieved.

Implications

The results from this study have important political and societal implications. In terms of political implications, biased news media coverage of female governors can influence what voters learn about these individuals and their overall assessments of their actions and accomplishments in office. These evaluations can ultimately impact the future careers of these women, including their decisions to run for re-election or to seek a higher political office such as the presidency. In terms of societal implications, the results from this study raise considerations for how gender roles and cultural stereotypes have been and continue to be used in our society. Some may feel that women’s increased presence in the male dominated political sphere is indicative of changing gender stereotypes. However, the gender bias found in the coverage of female governors even after they have assumed office indicates how commonplace gender stereotypes still are in our society.
Overview of chapters

The following section outlines the content of the chapters in this dissertation. Chapter 2 provides a thorough review of the literature at the intersection of politics, gender, and the news media. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first outlines the research conducted on the news media’s coverage of male and female candidates. The second section discusses the limited research that has examined the media’s treatment of female politicians once they have assumed office. The final section describes how the differential coverage of male and female candidates leads voters to form different evaluations of these individuals. This chapter concludes by listing the seven research hypotheses and two research questions that are based upon the previous research findings outlined in the chapter.

Chapter 3 describes the methods used in this study. This chapter includes how the male and female samples were chosen, who are included in the samples, and the news article selection process. In addition, this chapter discusses the coding procedures used in the content analysis as well as the two forms of data that were coded.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the analysis. This chapter is divided into three main sections. First, the quantity of coverage results are presented, including the total amount of coverage, the placement of coverage, and the types of articles written. Second, the quality of coverage results are presented which includes the tone of the coverage and the frames used. The final section discusses how the tone and frames are used across the key transition periods. This chapter includes both descriptive statistics, frequencies, cross-tabulations and chi-square results as well as a close textual reading of the articles. Chapter 5 is a discussion of the findings including the political and societal implications.
Chapter 6 presents the conclusion along with the limitations I encountered as well as directions for future research.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

To set the foundation for this study, a review of the research on the relationship between gender, politics, and the news media is necessary. The current research in the political communication field suggests that female candidates and female politicians in office receive more negative news media coverage than their male counterparts and this coverage is based upon traditional gender stereotypes and role expectations of women in our culture. In addition, research has shown that this differential coverage leads voters to form different evaluations of these individuals.

FEMALE CANDIDATES AND THE NEWS MEDIA

Research at the intersection of gender, politics, and communication often questions how the news media portray female candidates compared with their male counterparts. This research is crucial to the field of political communication as differential coverage can have a significant impact on voters’ perceptions of a candidate’s viability as well as actual voting outcomes. The empirical research in the field finds that male and female candidates are portrayed differently in campaign coverage in terms of the quantity and quality of coverage.

In terms of the quantity of coverage, systematic differences have been found in the amount of coverage given to male and female senatorial and presidential candidates. Overall, several studies have shown that male senatorial candidates receive more coverage than female candidates (Kahn, 1992; Kahn, 1994; Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991). Similar findings have been uncovered for presidential races as well (Falk, 2008; Heldman et al., 2005). The number of stories and the length of stories written about male presidential candidates are greater than for female presidential candidates (Falk, 2008). For example, when running for the Republican presidential nomination in 1999,
Elizabeth Dole received less coverage than George Bush or John McCain and was less likely to be included in the front page news than Bush or McCain (Heldman et al, 2005).

Despite the evidence indicating that women receive less coverage than men, other studies have found more equitable news media coverage. Research conducted by Bode and Hennings (2012), Bystrom et al. (2001), Devitt (2002), Jalalzai (2006), and Smith (1997) all show little evidence of differential coverage in terms of quantity. Devitt (2002) found that male and female gubernatorial candidates received about the same amount of coverage as their male counterparts. Bystrom et al. (2001), Jalalzai (2006) and Smith (1997) all found that female senatorial and gubernatorial candidates actually received more coverage than their male counterparts. Finally, Bode and Hennings (2012) found that vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin received more coverage than her male counterpart, Joseph Biden, in 2008.

These findings could indicate that the coverage of female candidates is not as gendered as other research would suggest. However, the parity found in the quantity of coverage could also be due to the novelty of female candidates running for historically male dominated offices, particularly in gubernatorial and vice presidential races in which most women are the first of their kind. The novelty of such races could alone result in more articles written about these “first” women. Greater equity in the quantity of coverage does not necessarily indicate that the coverage of female candidates is becoming more gender balanced. In order to fully determine if gender based patterns of coverage persist, it is necessary to examine the substance of coverage. A review of the literature regarding the quality or substance of coverage shows a clear pattern of gender bias.
Overall, it appears that news coverage of male and female candidates differs in terms of substance. Two distinct patterns in the news media’s portrayal of female candidates compared with male candidates are evident from the current body of research in the field. First, the coverage of female candidates is overwhelmingly negative in tone. Second, the news media use common gendered stereotypes in their portrayals of these women.

In terms of negative coverage, female candidates are often portrayed as less viable and competent than male candidates. Kahn and Goldenberg (1991) conducted a seminal study on the news media’s portrayal of male and female candidates running for U.S. Senate from 1982-1986. The authors found that the news media gave female candidates more negative viability assessments than their male counterparts. Male candidates were portrayed as being competitive whereas female candidates were portrayed as being less competitive. In addition, the news media negatively discussed the campaign resources or lack of campaign resources more for female candidates than for males regardless of their status as incumbents, challengers or running in open races.

Research conducted since Kahn and Goldenberg (1991) continue to highlight the negative viability coverage that female candidates receive compared with their male counterparts (Falk, 2008; Heldman et al., 2005; Jalalzai, 2006; Scharrer, 2002). Scharrer (2002) uncovered differential news media treatment in the substance of newspaper coverage of Hillary Clinton compared to Rudolph Giuliani in the 2000 race for New York Senate. Clinton was much more likely to receive negative statements regarding her likelihood of winning than Giuliani. She was often portrayed as an illegitimate or ill-prepared candidate.
Heldman et al. (2005) examined the newspaper coverage that Elizabeth Dole received in relation to other top Republican contenders for the presidential nomination in 1999. Dole was typically described as a losing candidate with little chance of winning the nomination. In addition, most discussions of Dole’s fundraising efforts mentioned her lack of ability to raise the necessary funds to launch a full-scale presidential campaign.

Falk (2008) found a similar pattern in the newspaper coverage of the eight most prominent women who have run for president from 1872 until 2004. Falk compared the press coverage these women received to the press coverage of the most equivalent man who sought the same office in the same year. The findings of the analysis indicate that despite changes in women’s social and political rights and changes in gender attitudes, the press coverage of female presidential candidates remain biased and prejudiced. The news media consistently portrayed these women as unnatural in politics, incompetent as leaders, and not viable candidates.

Jalalzai (2006) also found differences in viability assessments between male and female candidates. The author examined newspaper coverage of senatorial and gubernatorial candidates from between 1992 and 2000. In open races and as incumbents, women were portrayed as less viable than their male counterparts.

In addition to tone, the coverage of male and female candidates also differs in terms of the use of common gendered stereotypes. Sreberny-Mohammadi and Ross’s (1996) concept of “gendered mediation” is useful in explaining how common stereotypes are used in news reporting. Conventional news frames are not gender-neutral as the norms of objectivity would lead one to believe. Rather, news frames treat politics as a
male pursuit using a male norm and stereotypically masculine narratives (Gidengil & Everitt, 2003). As a result, the news media often relies upon a professional narrative when covering male candidates which includes discussions of experience, accomplishments, and positions on issues. However, when covering female candidates, the news media focuses on the personal including appearance, attire, marital status, and family life (Aday & Devitt, 2001; Devitt, 2002). In addition, because politics has traditional been a male pursuit, female politicians are subjected to greater evaluation and interpretation and any of their actions that run counter to stereotypical feminine behavior is heavily scrutinized (Gidengil & Everitt, 2003). Female candidates are often penalized for violating traditional gender roles and labeled aggressive and tough; qualities that could bring respect to male politicians, but often bring social disapproval to the female candidates that possess such qualities (Wadsworth et al., 1987). For example, both Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin suffered from the existence of a double bind during the 2008 election. They were viewed as incompetent if they appeared feminine, but at the same time, if they were viewed as competent, they were negatively perceived as unfeminine (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009).

Research at the intersection of politics, communication, and gender provides substantial support for the gendered mediation thesis. This research has shown that the news media use traditional gendered stereotypes to portray female candidates with an emphasis on the personal over the professional. Several studies have found that overall, female candidates receive less issue coverage and more personal coverage than their male counterparts (Aday & Devitt, 2001; Devitt, 2002; Kahn, 1993, 1994; Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991). When female candidates do receive issue coverage, it typically
concerns stereotypically feminine issues, such as education and health (Banwart et al., 2003; Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991; Wasburn & Wasburn, 2011) or social issues, such as gay marriage and immigration (Bode & Hennings, 2012) rather than stereotypical masculine issues such as the economy and foreign policy.

At the same time that female candidates receive less issue coverage, they receive more personal coverage than their male counterparts. Female candidates are more likely to be covered using personal frames that include discussions of their personality traits (Aday & Devitt, 2001; Anderson, 2002; Devitt, 2002; Heldman et al., 2005; Scharrer, 2002; Wasburn & Wasburn, 2011), their appearance including their attire (Anderson, 2002; Bode & Hennings, 2012; Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Devitt, 2002; Heldman et al., 2005), their age (Devitt, 2002), their emotionality (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Falk, 2008), and their family life including being mothers and wives (Banwart et al., 2003; Bode & Hennings, 2012; Bystrom et al., 2001; Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Falk, 2008).

In addition, female candidates are more likely to receive coverage that highlights their gender. For example, journalists repeatedly framed Elizabeth Dole as the “first woman” to be a major contender for the presidential bid thus implying she was a novelty rather than a serious candidate (Heldman et al., 2005). Dole was also labeled as a woman candidate and a women’s candidate, bringing gender into the foreground of her campaign (Anderson, 2002).

As the previous discussion illustrates, female candidates are portrayed differently from male candidates. The coverage of females is often more negative and based upon traditional gendered stereotypes. Women are often portrayed as less viable and competent than their male counterparts. In addition, common gendered stereotypes such
as references to their personality, appearance, age, emotionality, family, and gender are often found in news media coverage. This differential coverage has the potential of significantly impacting the public’s perception of a candidate’s viability which could influence election outcomes. Since female candidates are more likely than male candidates to be portrayed in a negative light with less issue discussions and more personal discussions, there is a greater chance that voters will question the competency and viability of these women based upon the type of coverage they receive.

**FEMALE POLITICIANS AND THE NEWS MEDIA**

Based upon previous research, the existence of differential news media coverage of male and female candidates is undeniable. However, what is less clear is what happens once these individuals assume office. According to Larson (2001) in her review of women and politics in the media, it appears that scholars lose interest in female candidates once they are elected to office. The female-as-candidate appears to be much more interesting than the female-as-elected official. The very limited research concerning politicians and news media coverage is proof of Larson’s point. Only a handful of studies have been conducted on women after Election Day. However, even with this limited research, a common finding emerges. Like the coverage of female candidates, it appears that the news media continue to use gendered news frames when covering elected female officials.

Braden (1996), Carroll and Schreiber (1997), Norris (1997), and Dabbous and Ladley (2010) have all found evidence of biased news media coverage of female politicians. Braden (1996) wrote a seminal book examining the coverage female politicians have received over time beginning with Jeannette Rankin in 1916 through until more recent politicians such as Kay Bailey Hutchison and Christine Todd Whitman.
in the 1990s. Braden cites examples throughout her book of the distinct differences in the coverage of male politicians compared with female politicians and how these differences have persisted across time. Reporters described women politicians with words that emphasized traditional gender roles, appearance, and behavior. Reporters perpetuated stereotypes of women as weak, indecisive, and emotional. Finally, women politicians were often held accountable for the actions of their children and husband whereas male politicians were not held to equivalent standards.

Similar to Braden (1996), Carroll and Schreiber (1997) also analyzed the news coverage of female politicians, specifically the quantity and content of newspaper articles of women who served in the 103rd Congress. The 1992 election, referred to as the "Year of the Woman," influenced the coverage of women in the 103rd Congress. Women who were elected to Congress for the first time during the 1992 election received more news coverage than their male counterparts and more coverage than senior women in Congress. These women were overall positively portrayed and viewed as agents of change. However, the issues that these women were reported working on were primarily "women's issues" such as health, abortion, and sexual harassment. The news reported on what women did collectively or the problems they shared as women. The newspaper coverage presented a narrow portrayal of what women in Congress accomplish in office and reinforced the belief that these women only do "women's stuff". Thus, even though these women received quite a bit of coverage and were positively portrayed as agents of change, the coverage was still gender-framed (Carroll & Schreiber, 1997).

The prevalence of gendered news frames was also found in a study conducted by Norris (1997) of women leaders throughout the world. Norris compared the coverage 10
female leaders received with the coverage of their closest male counterpart. Through a qualitative analysis, the author found that, overall, male world leaders received slightly more coverage than female world leaders. However, the coverage of women leaders did not reflect sex-role stereotypes, such as describing personal appearances or the traits of these women. The women were described as being ambitious, effective, and often more confrontational than their rivals. The coverage did not emphasize feminine characteristics, such as being conciliatory, compassionate, or sensitive. Also, these women were not defined by "women's issues," but rather were portrayed as supporting many different issues that were important to their countries. Despite the lack of sex-stereotyping in the coverage of these women, the news media did rely upon gendered news frames in the early coverage of these women. The three most common frames focused on 1) the breakthrough the appointment signified for all women, 2) the woman leader as an outsider, and 3) the woman leader as an agent of change (Norris, 1997).

In a more recent study, Dabbous and Ladley (2010) found similar results in terms of the news media’s use of gendered frames. The authors examined the news coverage of Nancy Pelosi beginning one week before mid-term elections through until the end of her first 100 hours as Speaker of the House. Consistent with previous literature on the coverage of female candidates, newspapers emphasized superficial issues, such as Pelosi’s family life, her attire, and the parties she organized rather than focusing on political issues or agendas. Pelosi's political training was often reduced to that of a mother and a grandmother. Pelosi was portrayed as a mother disciplining her children, her fellow Democrats in the House. The authors concluded that even though more and
more women are rising to higher political office, they continue to be evaluated in
gendered terms (Dabbous & Ladley, 2010).

As the preceding discussion illustrates, it appears from the literature that the news
media use gendered news frames in their coverage of female politicians. However, this
collection must be met with caution. Because only a handful of studies have been
conducted on female politicians, more research is needed in order to make sound
generalizations. In addition, the majority of research that does exist is over fifteen years
old, targets unique historical time periods, employs diverse methodologies, and limits
analysis to the beginning of terms.

Braden (1996), Carroll and Schreiber (1997), and Norris (1997) all examine
women leaders from the 1990s. While these authors make important contributions to the
field of political communication, without more recent research, it is impossible to know
whether these findings would hold true in the present-day culture. As more and more
women occupy higher political office compared with the 1990s, there may be greater
acceptance of the female office holder and as a result, the coverage of these women may
have changed with the changing times.

Likewise, Carroll and Schreiber (1997) and Dabbous and Ladley (2010) analyze
specific moments in time. Carroll and Schreiber’s study looks exclusively at the women
of the 103rd Congress. These women are very unique in that they were elected during
the election dubbed the “Women of the Year.” During this time period, more women
were elected to political office than ever before. This was a historical time that has since
never been repeated. Similarly, Dabbous and Ladley’s research on Nancy Pelosi, the first
female Speaker of the House, is also a unique case from a very specific time period. As a
result, findings related to the coverage of these women are not likely to be replicated in studies of women from other time periods or occupying other political positions.

Another flaw with the existing research on the coverage of female politicians is the use of diverse methodologies. Braden’s (1996) study lacks scientific rigor in that it is simply a recount of selected news stories. Carroll and Schreiber (1997) employ a systematic content analysis, whereas Norris (1997) opts for a qualitative analysis rather than systematic content analysis. Finally, Dabbous and Ladley (2010) used frame analysis, focusing on the most prominent and reoccurring frames used to describe Pelosi. Although all of these approaches have their own merit, because they are all diverse ways of measuring gender bias, it becomes difficult to compare findings across studies.

Finally, scholars studying the coverage of female office holders limit their analysis to a narrow time period after taking office. Dabbous and Ladley (2010) only analyze the coverage Pelosi received during her first 100 hours as Speaker. Similarly, Norris (1997) only examines the coverage female leaders worldwide received during the first week of their appointment. Finally, though a longer time frame, Carroll and Schreiber (1997) still only analyze newspaper coverage from January 1993 to October 1994. By limiting the analysis to only the first 100 hours, the first week, or the first 21 months, little is known about the entire term of these women including if any changes in gendered coverage occur the longer they occupy their positions.

**EFFECTS OF DIFFERENTIAL COVERAGE**

It is clear from the literature on female candidates and politicians that these women receive differential coverage based upon their gender. The next logical question is whether or not this gendered coverage impacts voters. Research has shown that
differential coverage does in fact lead voters to form different evaluations of male and female candidates (Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993; Kahn, 1992; Kropf & Boiney, 2001).

An experiment conducted by Kahn (1992) demonstrates how differential coverage leads to differential evaluations by voters. Kahn used the results from a content analysis of newspaper coverage surrounding U.S. Senate races from 1982-1986 to simulate news coverage in an experimental setting. The results of the experiment indicate that male and female candidates are evaluated differently. Candidates that were covered like male candidates (positive viability assessments and discussion of “masculine” issues and traits) were considered more viable than candidates that were covered like female candidates (negative viability assessments and discussion of “feminine” issues and traits). In addition, participants evaluated incumbents more positively than challengers. Since women are more likely to run as challengers than incumbents as there are so few women in elected office compared with men, this finding has significant implications for the electoral success of female candidates (Kahn, 1992).

In another experiment on the effects of differential coverage, Huddy and Terkildsen (1993) manipulated a candidate’s gender and gender-linked traits to determine a hypothetical candidate’s electoral chances. The authors found that typical masculine traits were more beneficial to candidates than feminine traits. Candidates that possessed more masculine qualities were viewed as more competent on more issues and received higher evaluations than those who possessed more feminine qualities (Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993). Thus when the coverage of male candidates focuses on issues and leadership qualities at the same time that the coverage of female candidates focuses on personality traits, appearance, and family life, this study indicates that voters may form
different evaluations of the viability of candidates simply based upon differential news media coverage.

Kropf and Boiney (2001) conducted another study that considers the viability of male and female candidates in the eyes of voters. The authors used survey data to examine the media habits of respondents and linked this to differences in the media coverage of male and female candidates. The authors hypothesized that a voter with high rates of news viewing and newspaper reading should be able to recognize a candidate and to name something they like about the candidate as much for women as for men unless there are differences in the news coverage of male and female candidates. The authors found that voters with increased exposure to print media were better able to recognize and name something they liked about male candidates more so than for female candidates. As for television news exposure, voters with higher levels of exposure were better able to mention something favorable about a male candidate than a female candidate. This study demonstrates that differential news coverage disadvantages women in that voters are less likely to recognize and name something positive about female candidates compared with their male counterparts. As a result, differential coverage significantly impacts the electoral success of female candidates.

As the previous review of the literature illustrates, differential coverage of male and female candidates leads voters to form different evaluations of these individuals and can play a role in the ultimate success of female candidates. It is important to recognize that this research is focused on candidates but has important implications for elected politicians. Just as gendered coverage of female candidates affects viability assessments, gendered coverage of female officeholders could significantly impact job approval.
ratings. Because politics occurs in the public sphere and has a long standing history of male domination, both the media and the public tend to value masculine characteristics in those who are seeking political office. If female governors are routinely covered in stereotypical ways that emphasize feminine characteristics, this could impact how the public feels about their success in office. For example, if news stories about female governors focus on their family life, their personality traits, their actions associated with stereotypical “feminine” issues, and the novelty of being the first female governor, the public may believe these women are not suited for their role in government. The public will consequently view these women as “bench warmers rather than an integral part of government” (Braden, 1996, p. 2). The type of coverage these women receive impacts their job approval rating which in turn affects their chances at being re-elected, the likelihood they will run for higher office, or the likelihood they will receive a federal appointment, all significant achievements for women in the male dominated political sphere.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES AND QUESTIONS

The current study contains research hypotheses and questions in an effort to both describe and explain the news coverage of male and female governors. The following hypotheses and questions are based upon previous research and a pilot study conducted by the researcher:

H1: Female governors receive less news article coverage than male governors.

H2: Female governors receive less prominently placed news article coverage than male governors.

H3: Female governors receive more opinion coverage than male governors.
H4: Female governors receive more negative coverage than male governors.
H5: Journalists use more issue frames when covering male governors than female governors.
H6: The issue coverage of male governors focuses more on stereotypical masculine issues, whereas the issue coverage of female governors focuses more on stereotypical feminine issues.
H7: Journalists use more personal, gendered, and strategy frames when covering female governors than male governors.
RQ1: Are there differences in how male and female governors are framed in news articles during the transition periods of their tenure?
RQ2: Are there differences in the tone of news article coverage for male and female governors during the transition periods of their tenure?

These hypotheses and research questions were designed to better understand how male and female governors are covered in the news media. They were developed based upon previous research that examined the news media coverage of female candidates, female officeholders, and the effects of differential coverage. Overall, this research has found evidence of gender biased coverage of women. First, the coverage of female candidates is more negative and based upon common gendered stereotypes of women. Second, the news media continue to use gendered news frames when covering elected female officials. Finally, differential coverage of male and female candidates leads voters to form different evaluations of these individuals and can play a role in the ultimate success of female candidates. The next chapter outlines the methods used in this study.
CHAPTER 3: METHODS

The purpose of this study was to provide an in-depth examination of an often overlooked area of research within the political communication field. I employed a content analysis of news articles to determine if differences exist in the coverage of male and female politicians in office. I analyzed the coverage of male and female U.S. governors in a newspaper in the state they govern. The coding categories included the frames and tone used in the coverage and how these aspects of the quality of coverage changed during key transitional periods during their tenure. This chapter discusses the male and female samples, the data collection process, and the coding categories.

Data

Individuals elected to the Office of U.S. Governor were selected for this study for two reasons. First, governors are the chief executive officer of the state, elected by the entire voting public of the state and serving all of the people in the state. As a result, they are in a high profile position that attracts both public attention and extensive local and national news attention more so than any other public official in the state (Barth & Ferguson, 2002; Kahn, 1994). Second, the Office of the Governor is often a stepping stone to the Oval Office. Approximately half of the U.S. Presidents in the twentieth century were governors before serving as president (Devitt, 1999). Three of the past five presidents were governors. As a result, if female governors receive biased news media treatment compared with their male counterparts, this could ultimately impact public perception, which in turn could affect their chances of winning second terms in office as well as bids for the presidency.
This study included all female governors elected to office beginning in 2001, for a total of 15 female governors. The female sample included 9 Republicans and 6 Democrats of which 9 had one term in office and 6 had two terms. This time period was chosen because (1) any shifts in the role of women in American politics may be detected by including female governors that assumed office over 10 years ago as well as those who have done so more recently, and (2) it includes as large a sample as possible without going so far back that the coverage no longer represents more recent trends (Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991). The 15 female governors included in this study were Jane Swift (R-MA), Linda Lingle (R-HI), Olene Walker (R-UT), Janet Napolitano (D-AZ), Kathleen Sebelius (D-KS), Jennifer Granholm (D-MI), Kathleen Blanco (D-LA), Jodi Rell (R-CT), Christine Gregoire (D-WA), Sarah Palin (R-AK), Beverly Perdue (D-NC), Jan Brewer (R-AZ), Mary Fallin (R-OK), Nikki Haley (R-SC), and Susana Martinez (R-NM).

In order to adequately compare the coverage surrounding both male and female governors, 15 male governors were also included in this study. In order to ensure a representative sample comparable to that of the female governors, a list was created of all male governors elected to office starting in 2001. From this list, 15 male governors were randomly selected based upon the year they took office to correspond to the sample of female governors. For example, since there were three female governors who took office in 2001, three male governors who took office in 2001 were randomly selected for inclusion in the study. The 15 male governors included in this study were Michael Easley (D-NC), Mark Warner (D-VA), Joe Kernan (D-IN), Craig Benson (R-NH), Sonny Perdue (R-GA), Bill Richardson (D-NM), Haley Barbour (R-MS), Dave Heineman (R-NE), Joe Manchin (D-WV), Sean Parnell (R-AK), Deval Patrick (D-MA), Gary Herbert
(R-UT), Rick Scott (R-FL), Mark Dayton (D-MN), and Brian Sandoval (R-NV). After the list was compiled, it was reviewed to ensure a balance in terms of party affiliation, geographic location, and number of terms in office. The male sample included 8 Republicans and 7 Democrats of which 8 had one term in office and 7 had two terms. Although this study does not address the news media’s coverage of race, it is important to note that the majority of male and female governors in the sample were white. The only nonwhite male governors were Governor Patrick (African American) and Governor Richardson (Hispanic), and the only nonwhite female governor was Governor Martinez (Hispanic).

This study focused solely on the news coverage surrounding governors. News articles were selected as opposed to television news coverage for several reasons. First, news articles are an important source of political information for the public (Banwart et al., 2003; Bystrom et al., 2001; Kahn, 1994). News articles, compared with local television coverage, offer the public much more detailed accounts of political news (Eshbaugh-Soha, 2008) including politician’s words and actions (Aday & Devitt, 2001), stories on state-wide races (Jalalzai, 2006), and independent information about state politics (Freedman & Thai, 2006). Second, news articles are believed to influence how the public views politicians. Research has shown that increased exposure to newspapers is linked to increased levels of voter knowledge and candidate recognition (Goldenberg & Traugott, 1987; Lichter & Noyes, 1995), as well as political participation (McLeod et al., 1999; Scheufele et al., 2003). Finally, the majority of research on the news media coverage of candidates (Aday & Devitt, 2001; Banwart et al., 2003; Bystrom et al., 2001; Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Devitt, 1999; Devitt, 2002; Heldman et al., 2005; Jalalzai, 2006;
Kahn, 1994; Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991; Smith, 1997), as well as the limited research examining coverage of politicians (Carroll & Schreiber, 1997; Norris, 1997; Dabbous and Ladley, 2010) analyze news articles. Since this study was an attempt to extend the research on candidates to elected politicians, using news articles instead of television news allowed for the ability to make comparisons to previous findings.

It is important to note that this study used text-based digital news archives. By using digital news archives, articles that appeared both in print and online were included in the study. One potential limitation of using digital news archives was that these services do not inform the user of the source of the article, whether online or print. Therefore, researchers are unable to measure differences in the content of online compared with print versions. However, research has shown that online and print versions strongly resemble one another in terms of structure and content of stories (d’Haenens et al., 2004) despite the greater number of articles in online compared with print versions (Tewksbury & Althaus, 2000). Therefore, although the content of the print version cannot be compared with the online version, one can assume that the content will be similar for both. As such, this content analysis examined all types of news article content that any one reader could be exposed to, regardless of outlet.

Each politician selected for this study was paired with the newspaper with the largest or second largest circulation in the state they govern based upon news availability, as identified by the Audit Bureau of Circulations. (See Table 1 and 2 for a listing of the newspapers and corresponding governors). The largest circulating newspapers were chosen because they have the potential to impact a greater number of people in the state compared with newspapers with a smaller circulation (Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991; Kahn,
A search of the Lexis Nexis Academic Database and the Westlaw Database was conducted using the name of each governor in the headline of the news story with a minimum of 7 mentions of the name of the governor in the article. These criteria ensured the article was actually about the governor rather than simply mentioning his or her name in the context of some other topic. To capture the news coverage of the politician while in office, the time frame for the search was tailored to each individual governor to include the news coverage the day after their election until the day before the inauguration of their successor. If the governor assumed the position through the resignation of a predecessor, the time frame for the article search began on the day the predecessor announced his or her resignation until the day before the inauguration of the successor.

Due to the large volume of articles written about each governor, this study did not analyze all coverage but sampled a subset of articles. To generate the sample, all articles that matched the search criteria for each individual governor were pulled from the Lexis Nexis and Westlaw databases. A simple random sample of 25% was then selected from the population of articles for each governor. The sample was randomly selected using a random-number table. For example, there were 830 articles written about Governor Granholm the day after the election until the end of her two terms (November 6, 2002 – January 1, 2011). A 25% sample of the population consisted of 207 articles. Therefore, a random-number table was generated to contain 207 numbers from 1-830. The articles were listed in order by date. Based upon the random-number table, 207 articles were selected to be included in the sample. To ensure a large enough representation of all politicians in the sample, a minimum threshold of articles was set at 100. Therefore, if a 25% sample from the population did not meet the minimum threshold, then 100 articles
were randomly selected to be included in the study\(^1\). For example, there were 166 articles written about Governor Beverly Perdue from after her election until the end of the data collection (November 4, 2008 – January 1, 2013). Since a 25% sample of the population would result in less than 100 articles, 100 articles were randomly selected for Governor Perdue to meet the minimum threshold. Tables 1 and 2 list the governors included in the study, the number of articles in the population and sample for each governor as well as the newspaper and source from which the articles were pulled.

Table 1: Female Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Female Governors</th>
<th>Population of articles</th>
<th>Sample of articles</th>
<th>Total Paragraphs</th>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen Blanco (D-LA)</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>2,482</td>
<td>The Times-Picayune</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Brewer (R-AZ)</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2,078</td>
<td>The Arizona Republic</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Fallin (R-OK)</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,598</td>
<td>The Oklahoman</td>
<td>Lexis Nexis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Granholm (D-MI)</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>3,288</td>
<td>The Detroit News</td>
<td>Lexis Nexis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Gregoire (D-WA)</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2,510</td>
<td>Seattle Times</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikki Haley (R-SC)</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2,123</td>
<td>Columbia State</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda Lingle (R-HI)</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2,142</td>
<td>Honolulu Advertiser</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susana Martinez (R-NM)</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,582</td>
<td>Las Cruces Sun - News</td>
<td>Lexis Nexis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet Napolitano (D-AZ)</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>2,102</td>
<td>The Arizona Republic</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Palin (R-AK)</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>2,913</td>
<td>Anchorage Daily News</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverly Perdue (D-NC)</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,389</td>
<td>Charlotte Observer</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jodi Rell (R-CT)</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>3,042</td>
<td>Hartford Courant</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen Sebelius (D-KS)</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,808</td>
<td>Topeka Capital-Journal</td>
<td>Lexis Nexis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Swift (R-MA)</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,965</td>
<td>Boston Globe</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olene Walker (R-UT)</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>1,667</td>
<td>The Salt Lake Tribune</td>
<td>Lexis Nexis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,169</td>
<td>1,703</td>
<td>32,689</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) The population of articles for Governor Walker was only 94 articles. Because the population was so small, all articles about Governor Walker that met the search criteria were included in the study.
Table 2: Male Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male Governors</th>
<th>Population of articles</th>
<th>Sample of articles</th>
<th>Total Paragraphs</th>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haley Barbour (R-MS)</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,576</td>
<td>Sun Herald</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craig Benson (R-NH)</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,761</td>
<td>The Union Leader</td>
<td>Lexis Nexis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Dayton (D-MN)</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,895</td>
<td>Star Tribune</td>
<td>Lexis Nexis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Easley (D-NC)</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,824</td>
<td>Charlotte Observer</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave Heineman (R-NE)</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>3,014</td>
<td>Omaha World-Herald</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary Herbert (R-UT)</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,637</td>
<td>The Salt Lake Tribune</td>
<td>Lexis Nexis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Kernan (D-IN)</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2,441</td>
<td>The Indianapolis Star</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Manchin (D-WV)</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>3,038</td>
<td>Charleston Gazette</td>
<td>Lexis Nexis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean Parnell (R-AK)</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,557</td>
<td>Anchorage Daily News</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deval Patrick (D-MA)</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>4,273</td>
<td>Boston Globe</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonny Perdue (R-GA)</td>
<td>1010</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>4,958</td>
<td>The Atlanta Journal-Constitution</td>
<td>Lexis Nexis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Richardson (D-NM)</td>
<td>831</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>4,420</td>
<td>Albuquerque Journal</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Sandoval (R-NV)</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,974</td>
<td>Las Vegas Review-Journal</td>
<td>Lexis Nexis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rick Scott (R-FL)</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>1,943</td>
<td>Tampa Bay Times</td>
<td>Westlaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Warner (D-VA)</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,925</td>
<td>The Virginian-Pilot</td>
<td>Lexis Nexis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|               | 6,492                  | 1,967              | 38,236         |                           |              |

This study examined news stories, opinion columns, and editorials. Opinion pieces and editorials were selected for inclusion because, according to Loke et al. (2011), they “incorporate meanings articulated and reproduced by the press” (p. 209). Even though these pieces reflect the opinion of the author rather than the newspaper, the newspaper ultimately chooses what content to include and what to exclude, thus influencing readers simply based on these decisions. In addition, this study only included articles in which the governor was the focus of the story and therefore, excluded those that simply mention his or her name in passing.

Coding

The code categories and analytic approach followed the guidelines for content analysis established by Krippendorff (2003) and Neuendorf (2002). The codebook for this study was developed from previous research concerning the news media’s coverage
of male and female candidates (Kahn, 1994; Devitt, 1999; See Appendix for the complete codebook). The coding categories were adjusted to incorporate differences inherent in the newspaper coverage of candidates compared with that of elected officials. For example, coding categories that consider the competitiveness of the campaigns and the type of race (i.e. incumbent vs. challenger) were eliminated, whereas categories that deal with the transition from a candidate to an elected official and the job duties of the office were created. In addition, this study did not examine the use of quotations like in previous research. For example, Devitt (1999) examined candidate quotations for the presence or absence of supporting claims. I chose not to include quotations because I was more concerned with how the governor was framed rather than who was quoted in a paragraph. Journalists decide which quotations to use in their coverage and these choices become part of how politicians are framed. Therefore, there was no need to separately analyze quotations.

This study contained two forms of data. The first was demographic data about the governor and the newspaper that was coded at the level of the article. This data did not require intercoder agreement as this information was simply transferred and recorded directly from the newspaper. This data included the governor’s name, gender, and party affiliation as well as the name of the newspaper, the publication date, the section in which the article appeared, the type of article (i.e. news story, opinion column, editorial), and the gender of the author.

Also included in the basic demographic data was a variable that described the time period the article was written corresponding to the governor’s timeframe in office. The first time period was Governor-elect, which started the day after the election and
ended the day before the governor was inaugurated into office. The second time period was the *Term* which started the day the governor was inaugurated into office and ended at the beginning of the campaign season. The campaign season began on the day the governor announced his or her intentions to run for another term. The *Term* time period began again immediately following the re-election of the governor until the election of his or her successor. The third time period was *Campaign* which began on the day the governor announced he or she would run for another term in office and ended on Election Day. The fourth time period was *Lame duck* which started the day after Election Day in which the governor either lost the election or in the case that he or she did not run, a successor was declared. The fifth time period was *Recount*. This time period began the day after the election and ended once a recount vote was decided. This category applied only to Governors Dayton and Gregoire who were involved in a recount vote following Election Day. The sixth time period was *Governor in waiting* which began the day the predecessor announced his or her resignation and ended the day before the governor was inaugurated into office. The governor was usually the lieutenant governor and succeeded the governor who resigned. This category applied to Governors Brewer, Heineman, Herbert, Kernan, Parnell, Rell, Swift, and Walker. The final time period was *Campaign for national office*. This category applied only to Governors Palin and Richardson. The time period for Governor Palin began on the day she was announced as the 2008 vice presidential nominee and ended on the day after the election. The time period for Governor Richardson began on the day he announced his 2008 presidential campaign and ended on the day he withdrew from the race.
The second form of data was coded at the level of the paragraph. This data included whether the paragraph was about the governor, the tone of the paragraph, and the frame of the paragraph. Because this data was evaluative, it was subjected to intercoder agreement. After several practice rounds, 10% of the sample of news articles was coded to measure intercoder agreement. Two coders obtained reliability as measured with Krippendorff’s alpha of at least .75 for all coding categories (all alphas reported below), exceeding the minimum threshold of .68 that Krippendorff suggests (Krippendorff, 2003).

**About Governor.** This category assessed the number of paragraphs that were devoted to the governor (Krippendorff’s $\alpha = .97$). These paragraphs described the governor, discussed his or her actions, or quoted the governor. Paragraphs that contained phrases such as “the governor’s staff” or “the governor’s administration” were coded as being about the governor. Paragraphs that were not about the governor were not coded any further.

**Tone of Paragraph.** The second category determined if the tone of the paragraph was positive, negative/critical, positive and negative, or neutral (Krippendorff’s $\alpha = .85$).

**Frames.** A final category analyzed the frames used by the news media. According to Norris (1997), news frames “guide the selection, presentation, and evaluation of information, for journalists and readers, by slotting new events, issues, or actors into familiar categories” (p.155). Reporters make conscious and unconscious decisions about what information to make salient in a news article. Frames are used to call attention to certain information while directing attention away from other information (Entman, 1993). Because of journalistic standards, reporters rarely use
blatant gender stereotypes in their coverage (Devitt, 1999; Norris, 1997). Therefore, this study used frame analysis to detect the subtle, nuanced ways in which reporters cover male and female governors that often go undetected. Each paragraph was coded as an issue frame, a personal frame, a strategy frame, a gendered frame, containing multiple frames, or none of the above (“other”) (Krippendorff’s $\alpha = .87$).

**Issue frame.** Issue frames reference a politician’s proposals or actions both in office and while on the campaign trail. These include proposals such as pending legislation, public policy positions, and campaign platforms as well as specific actions such as executive orders, legislative vetoes, and governmental appointments. Issue frames also include public appearances made by the governor, meetings with constituents, speeches delivered to various groups, and state of the state addresses.

**Personal frame.** Personal frames are concerned with aspects of the politicians as individuals including their personal or professional backgrounds. These include references to their appearance, family, marital status, personality, background, qualifications, age, and pregnancy.

It is important to note that paragraphs about Governors Richardson and Palin during their campaigns for national office were removed from the personal frame analysis. The coverage of Governor Richardson contained an extremely high number of personal frames compared with other governors because of his candidacy for president in 2007. These paragraphs discussed his background and qualifications for national office. In order to adjust for this anomaly, all paragraphs about Governor Richardson that contained a personal frame during his campaign for president were removed from the
analysis. In order to be equitable, the paragraphs about Governor Palin that contained a personal frame during her campaign for vice president were also removed.

**Strategy frame.** Strategy frames or horse-race descriptions are commonly used during campaigns. These frames are concerned with whether or not the candidate is ahead, the tactics the candidate uses to get votes, and where the candidate campaigned (Devitt, 1999). Strategy frames also relate to job approval ratings while in office, the governor’s long-term political viability, and the governor’s overall popularity.

**Gendered frame.** The gender frame brings notions of gender into the foreground. It can include leadership breakthroughs such as the governor being the “first female governor” or the “first woman governor,” as well as describing the governor using specific gendered terms such as *woman, female, or girl*. The gender frame also applies to discussions about gendered roles that the governor occupies or has occupied in the past such as mother, father, and breadwinner. The gender frame is also relevant to discussions that contain analogies or metaphors that highlight the stereotypical role played by a man or woman. These include stereotypical male references such as war, fighting, and sports and stereotypical female references such as rocking a baby and cooking. Finally, this frame also references any obstacles the female governors face directly related to gender such as gender bias or gender politics.

**Multiple frame.** Paragraphs that contained more than one frame were coded as multiple. This included any combination of issue, personal, strategy, and gendered frames. If a paragraph was coded as multiple, the specific types of frames found in the paragraph were also recorded. After the results were run, this category was collapsed. The individual types of frames for each paragraph were added to the totals for issue,
personal, strategy and gendered frames. So for example, if a paragraph contained both an issue and personal frame, I added a count to my total for issue and my total for personal. Therefore, the total counts for each frame represents the number of occurrences of that frame rather than an accurate representation of the number of paragraphs.

*Other frame.* Paragraphs that were about the governor or mentioned the governor and were not an issue, personal, strategy or gendered frame were coded as other.

*Type.* The last category that was coded was type. The type category corresponds directly to issue and personal frames. Once a coder decided the paragraph was an issue frame, the coder then indicated the type from a list of 22 possible issues. The list of issues was developed inductively. As coders practiced coding each paragraph, a list of issues was created and refined to include all issues found in the news article coverage. Issues included such topics as: crime, economy, education, energy, immigration, health, public safety, tourism, transportation, and welfare. (See Appendix for a complete list of types with descriptions). In addition to type of issue, coders also indicated the type of personal frame from a list of 9 possible types. This list was developed from previous research (Devitt, 1999). Personal references included: appearance, family, marital status, personality, background, qualifications, age, and other. In addition, a personal category was added to this list to reflect discussions about pregnant governors. This category applied to Governors Palin and Swift who were both pregnant while in office. When multiple issue or personal frames were discussed, the paragraph was coded for the three most prominent types. Krippendorff's alpha scores were calculated for each of the three possible type categories with each alpha exceeding the minimum threshold of reliability.
(Type 1 Krippendorff’s $\alpha = .75$, Type 2 Krippendorff’s $\alpha = .75$, Type 3 Krippendorff’s $\alpha = .84$).

In addition to coding these two forms of data, I researched if each governor ran for re-election and the outcome. This information was originally going to be used to determine if the type of news article coverage a governor received during his or her first term can be used to predict re-election success. However, only two governors lost their re-election bids (Governors Benson and Kernan). Therefore, because the sample size was so small, this question was eliminated from the analysis.

In order to analyze the differences in the coverage of male and female politicians in office, I examined the news article coverage surrounding 15 men and 15 women who had assumed the Office of U.S. Governor over the past 10 years. In order to address the hypotheses and research questions, coding was conducted at the level of the article and at the level of the paragraph. Coding categories were developed that examined the frames and tone used in the coverage of these men and women and how this coverage changed over transitional periods of their governorship. The following chapter discusses the results of this study by comparing the differences and similarities between the news media coverage of male and female governors. The analysis includes a systematic content analysis, in which descriptive statistics, frequencies, cross-tabulations and chi-square results are reported. In addition, a close textual reading of the articles is also included to further understand how politicians were portrayed in news media coverage.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The purpose of this dissertation is to extend the research on candidates and the news media to elected officials. Little is known about the coverage that male and female politicians receive after Election Day and if differences exist. This chapter presents the results of the study in the order of the research hypotheses and research questions. First, differences in the quantity of coverage for male and female governors are presented including differences in the overall amount of coverage, the placement of the articles, and the types of articles written about the governors. Second, differences in the quality of coverage are discussed. This includes the tone and frames used in the coverage of male and female governors. Finally, the research questions are addressed. In order to answer the research questions, I explore the differences in how tone and frames are used during transitional periods that reflect changes in a governor’s status while in office. The results of the study indicate that important differences exist in the news media coverage of male and female governors.

Sample size

This study analyzed the differences and similarities between the news media coverage of male and female governors as well as differences over time. In order to test the research hypotheses and address the research questions, 11,661 articles met the search criteria and made up the population of articles. A 25% sample was taken for each governor from the population of articles which resulted in a total of 3,670 articles included in the study. Since the level of analysis for this study was the paragraph, the articles were broken down by paragraphs. Overall, 70,925 paragraphs were coded.
Quantity of coverage

The quantity and quality of coverage were analyzed as both are important aspects of how the news media cover politicians. To assess quantity, the number of articles written about each governor, the prominence of the coverage, and the type of article were coded for each governor. The number, placement, and type are all important indicators of the significance of a governor to state politics.

In order to address the first hypothesis (H1), that female governors receive less print news coverage than male governors, the differences in the amount of coverage between male and female governors were analyzed. Of the total number of articles included in the population, there were more articles written about male governors than female governors. Of the total population of articles, 56% (6,492) were about male governors and 44% (5,169) were about female governors (See Tables 1 and 2 in methods section for a listing of all governors).

The differences in the number of articles written for male and female governors were statistically significant, $\chi^2(1, N = 11,661) = 149.87, p = .00$. Therefore, H1 was supported. The findings suggest that female governors receive less news article coverage than male governors.

Placement of coverage

In addition to the number of articles written, the placement of coverage was analyzed as another component of the quantity of coverage. Previous research has found that female candidates were less likely to be included in the front page news than their male counterparts (Heldman et al, 2005). This study sought to extend these findings to determine if the coverage of female governors was less prominently placed. In order to
test the second hypothesis (H2), that female governors receive less prominently placed news article coverage than male governors, each article was coded for the section of the newspaper in which it appeared.

Of the total sample, the majority of articles appeared in the national section of the newspaper followed by the local section. Comparably fewer articles appeared in the entertainment, opinion/editorial, or other sections. In comparing male and female governors, the coverage of male governors was more likely to appear in the national/front section of the newspaper than for female governors. In contrast, the coverage of female governors was more likely to appear in articles written in the local/state section of the newspaper than for male governors. The coverage of female governors was also more likely to be placed in a section other than the first two sections of the newspaper. Of the articles written about female governors, 23.1% appeared in articles in the entertainment, opinion and other sections of the newspaper. Of the articles written about the male sample, only 19.1% appeared in one of these sections (see Table 3).

Table 3: Placement of Coverage: Male and Female Governors Compared

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Total Sample (%)</th>
<th>Male (%)</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National/Front/A</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>40.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local/Metro/State/B</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment/Life/Style/Living</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion/Editorial/Viewpoints</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/None</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This study analyzed the differences between the placement of coverage for male and female governors at the level of the article and found statistically significant differences, $\chi^2(4, N=3,670) = 23.66, p = .00$. Differences were also analyzed at the level of the paragraph to ensure the significance of these results. The results are consistent with those found at the level of the article and are statistically significant, $\chi^2(4, N = 45,589) = 436.33, p = .00$.²

Overall, these results suggest that coverage surrounding male governors was more likely to appear in front page and national news than female governors. In addition, the coverage of female governors was more likely to appear in a section other than the first two sections of a newspaper. Therefore, H2 is supported. The findings suggest that female governors received less prominently placed news article coverage than male governors.

*Type of article*

The type of article was analyzed as a final component of the quantity of coverage. Although the type of article is included in the basic demographic data of this study and, therefore, part of the quantity of coverage, it also relates directly to the quality of coverage. The type of article is a preliminary indicator of tone. The more news stories written about a governor, the more likely that coverage is neutral with factual, unbiased, and objective reporting. Consequently, the more opinion pieces and editorials written about a governor, the coverage is more likely to be positive, negative or both.

In order to test the third hypothesis, that female governors receive more opinion coverage than male governors, each article was examined to determine if it was a news

² Although the percentage differences between males and females are small due to the large sample size, significant differences were still established.
story, an opinion column, or an editorial. Of the total number of articles in the sample, the overwhelming majority of articles were news stories (89.3%). Opinion pieces made up 7.1% of the total sample and editorials 3.6%.

In comparing male and female governors, differences were found in the type of articles written about them. More news stories were written about male governors than their female counterparts. Of the paragraphs written about the male governors, 90.8% were in news stories, whereas 87.6% of the paragraphs written about the female governors were in news stories. It follows then that more editorials and opinion columns were written about female governors. Of the paragraphs written about the female governors, 12.3% were combined opinion pieces and editorials, whereas 9.2% of the paragraphs written about male governors were these types of articles.

The differences between the types of articles written about male and female governors were statistically significant at the level of the article, \( \chi^2(2, N = 3,670) = 9.95, p = .007 \). Differences were also analyzed at the level of the paragraph and were found to be statistically significant, \( \chi^2(2, N = 45,589) = 161.92, p = .00 \). Therefore, H3 was supported. The findings suggest that female governors receive more overall opinion coverage than male governors.

In order to better understand the differences in the news article coverage of male and female governors, the first component of this study analyzed differences in the quantity of coverage. The results suggest that important differences exist in the quantity of coverage for male and female governors. Female governors received less news coverage, less prominently placed coverage, and more opinionated coverage than male governors.
Quality of coverage

In addition to the quantity of coverage, the quality of coverage was analyzed. To assess quality, the tone and frames used in the coverage of male and female governors were coded. In this study, tone is the attitude conveyed about the governor and news frames are descriptions used by journalists about the governor that are made salient in a news article. This study examined the tone and frame of each paragraph to determine if systematic differences exist in the quality of coverage between male and female governors. Similar to the quantity of coverage, previous research has found important differences between the quality of coverage for male and female governors.

Tone

The tone of each paragraph was coded as positive, negative, positive and negative, or neutral. The overwhelming majority of news article coverage including news stories, opinion pieces and editorials for both male and female governors was neutral in tone (86%). News stories were much more likely to be neutral than either opinion columns or editorials. In comparing the types of articles, 65.8% of opinion columns and 71.8% of editorials were neutral compared with 88.0% of news stories.

The neutral coverage in this study consistently took one of three possible forms. First, neutral coverage often contained reporting verbs such as “said,” “promised,” “told,” “spoke,” “mentioned,” and “responded” to convey information about the governors. An example of the use of neutral reporting verbs can be found in the following paragraph about Governor Martinez from *Las Cruces Sun-News*:

Martinez promised that the state would provide additional teacher support and training to make sure that students who need the most help get it. Otherwise, she said, children who cannot read well in the early grades will continue to falter as
classes get more advanced. Those kids, she said, frequently become dropouts without much of a chance at a happy, fulfilling life. (Simonich, 2011a)

In this example, the journalist relied upon the verbs “said” and “promised” to provide an objective and factual account of what Governor Martinez told the state Legislature regarding education reform.

The second pattern found in neutral news coverage was the use of quotations. Journalists frequently included direct quotes from governors in their reporting. Directly quoting a governor provided a neutral account of his or her words. The following paragraph was a direct quote from Governor Heineman concerning the state budget:

“My proposal was developed with middle-class Nebraska families in mind,” Heineman said. “When family income is down, families reduce spending. When business income is down, businesses reduce spending. When state revenues are down, state government should reduce its spending.” (Hammel, 2009b)

In this paragraph, the quote from Governor Heineman is an example of news article coverage with a neutral tone.

The final pattern found in news coverage with a neutral tone was a blend of reporting verbs and quotations. Often journalists would use quotations and reporting verbs in the same paragraph to provide a neutral account of events. The Boston Globe combined direct quotes with the use of reporting verbs in the following paragraph about Governor Patrick:

Patrick said the Republican platform is about leaving people to fend for themselves. “At the end of the day, the American people will choose a partnership, which is about helping people help themselves,” he said. Patrick said
the American Jobs Act, Obama's $447 billion proposal for stimulating the economy through tax cuts and government spending, is only the latest manifestation of this. (Schoenberg, 2011)

In this example, the journalist paraphrased Governor Patrick by using “said” and included a direct quotation from one of his television appearances.

The majority of news article coverage was neutral, but when the coverage was non-neutral, differences were found between male and female governors. In order to test the fourth hypothesis (H4), that female governors receive more negative coverage than male governors, the differences in the tone used for male and female governors were analyzed. The results of the analysis suggest that the news article coverage for female governors was more negative than for male governors. Of the coverage written about female governors, 9.4% was negative whereas 8% was negative for the male sample. These differences were statistically significant, $\chi^2(3, N = 45,589) = 123.38, p = .00$. Therefore, H4 is supported. Female governors received more negative coverage than their male counterparts.

Negative paragraphs had two distinct patterns. First, negative news article coverage was more likely to occur in opinion pieces (23.0%) and editorials (15.8%) than in news stories (7.4%). Writers of opinion pieces and editorials have more freedom to express their own personal opinions, and therefore, opinion columns and editorials have more tone than news stories. In addition, because of this freedom, the negative tone found in opinion columns and editorials was harsher than that found in news stories. The following paragraph about Governor Palin from the *Anchorage Daily News* is an example.

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3 The second most frequently occurring tone for the entire sample was negative. Journalists were twice as likely to use a negative than positive tone in their coverage (8.7% vs. 4.5%). In addition, more recent articles had a more negative tone than past articles.
of how negative tone was used in an opinion piece: “The governor's appearance on KWHL's "The Bob and Mark Show" last week is plain and simple one of the most unprofessional, childish and inexcusable performances I've ever seen from a politician” (Fagan, 2008). Through the words “unprofessional,” “childish,” and “inexcusable,” the columnist painted a very negative and critical image of Governor Palin’s behavior during a radio talk show appearance.

Another example of negative tone was found in an opinion column in the *Times Picayune* about Governor Blanco:

> The unfolding catastrophe sent Blanco reeling. She despair, while the world watched. She failed to ask for the right type of help the right way. When the time came to appoint a rebuilding commission and craft a legislative agenda to deal with the new reality, she dallied. She came across as at once paralyzed and desperate. (Grace, 2005)

In this example, the columnist described Governor Blanco’s actions negatively through the use of the words “failed,” “dallied,” “paralyzed,” and “desperate.” This description offers a critical view of the governor; one that is in direct contrast to what is expected from the chief executive officer of the state.

A paragraph from the *Boston Globe* about Governor Swift offers a final example of the critical tone that was found in many opinion and editorial pieces:

> From using her professional staff as movers and sitters to taking a state helicopter home to North Adams to accepting an odiferous teaching arrangement at Suffolk University, Swift's poor judgment has hurt her badly. So has her stubbornness, manifested as an initial thumbing of her nose at her critics. (Lehigh, 2001)
In this paragraph, the *Boston Globe* listed Governor Swift’s seemingly unethical actions while in office highlighting how she used professional resources for personal purposes. In addition, the critical tone found in this paragraph was also conveyed through the negative character traits of “poor judgment” and “stubbornness.”

The second pattern common in negative news article coverage was quoting or paraphrasing individuals or groups that expressed a negative or critical opinion of the governor. Unlike the previous examples, these instances were often found in news stories. The following paragraph from the *Charleston Gazette* offers a negative view of Governor Manchin:

“There's a lot of anger directed at the governor today,” noted Gordon Simmons, an organizer with the state Public Employees Union UE Local 170. “It's a pretty universal perception that he's very arrogant and very haughty in how he deals with state employees, and this is more evidence of that.” (Kabler, 2009)

In the above example, the *Charleston Gazette* used a direct quote from an individual associated with the Public Employees Union that expressed a negative sentiment towards the governor through the words “anger,” “arrogant,” and “haughty.”

Another example of how news article coverage conveyed a negative tone by quoting others was found in the *Boston Globe*:

“We understand the governor had a difficult budget this year, but we are disappointed he is not fulfilling his commitment,” said Thomas J. Philbin, associate director of the Conservation and Recreation Campaign, which works to provide access to public lands. “It is critically important to the vitality of the state
to have the quality of life and amenities these parks provide.” (Wangsness & Daley, 2007)

In this paragraph, the Boston Globe used a quote from an associate director who expressed a negative sentiment about Governor Patrick through the words “disappointed” and “not fulfilling his commitment.”

Although female governors received more negative coverage, they also received more positive coverage than their male counterparts. Of the paragraphs written about female governors, 5.4% were positive, whereas 3.6% of the paragraphs written about the male sample were positive. However, female governors were more likely to receive negative than positive coverage. Paragraphs with a positive tone followed the same patterns as those with a negative tone in that the positive sentiments were either conveyed through quoting or paraphrasing others or in opinion pieces and editorials. The following paragraph about Governor Barbour is an example of a positive tone:

“Thank God we've got somebody like him as a leader in our country,” Gulfport Mayor George Schloegel said after Haley Barbour gave a speech on the state budget and other issues in Biloxi. “What are we going to do without him?” (Pender, 2011)

In this paragraph, the Sun Herald used a quotation from a mayor to express a positive sentiment about the governor. In another example, the Arizona Republic’s editorial board wrote the following positive comment: “Gov. Jan Brewer's straightforward, down-to-earth manner is one of her most appealing qualities. Her career in public office is not a story of political gamesmanship. She is, in a word, real” (Arizona Republic Editorial Board, 2009). In this paragraph, the positive sentiment is conveyed by the Editorial
Board through the words “straightforward,” “down-to-earth,” “appealing,” and “real” to describe Governor Brewer.

Overall, the majority of coverage for both male and female governors was neutral. However, when the coverage was non-neutral, the recipients were more likely to be female governors. These women received more negative (9.4% vs. 8%), more positive (5.4% vs. 3.6%), more negative and positive (0.9% vs. 0.8%), and as a result, less neutral coverage than their male counterparts (87.6% vs. 84.3%).

Frames

Similar to tone, the news frames used when covering governors is another important indicator of the quality of coverage. The news frames for each paragraph were coded as issue, personal, strategy, gendered, multiple or other. Issue frames describe proposals or actions of governors in office or on the campaign trail. Personal frames are concerned with aspects of the politicians as individuals including their personal or professional backgrounds. Strategy frames describe the tactics used during campaigns as well as the overall performance of the governor while in office. Gendered frames bring notions of gender into the foreground such as gender roles and gender stereotypes. Multiple frames are any combination of issue, personal, strategy, and gendered frames. Table 4 shows the distribution of frames for the entire sample as well as the differences in the use of frames for male and female governors.

Overall, important differences were found in how news coverage framed male and female governors. The differences in the use of frames were statistically significant, $\chi^2(4, N = 45,589) = 262.25, p = .00$. The news article coverage of male governors was more likely to contain issue frames, whereas the coverage of female governors was more likely to contain personal, gendered, and strategy frames.
Table 4: Frames: Male and Female Governors Compared

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Total Sample (%)</th>
<th>Male (%)</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gendered</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Issue frames*

Issue frames include discussions of proposals or actions while in office and on the campaign trail. This includes pending legislation, public policy positions, and campaign platforms as well as executive orders, legislative vetoes, and governmental appointments. Issue frames also include public appearances, meetings with constituents, speeches delivered to various groups, and state of the state addresses. Overall, the findings suggest that news article coverage of male governors was more likely to contain issue frames. Of the paragraphs written about male governors, 66% were issue frames compared with 65% for female governors. Therefore, H5 was supported. Male governors received more issue-framed coverage than female governors.

The types of issues discussed for male and female governors were compared in order to test the sixth hypothesis. Important differences were found in the topics discussed for males and females. These differences were statistically significant, $\chi^2(21, N = 31,020) = 679.02, p = .00$. The results can be viewed in Table 5. The types of issues discussed for male and female governors did not fall along stereotypical gender lines so therefore, H6 was not supported.
Table 5: Type of Issue Coverage: Male and Female Governors Compared

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Total Sample (%)</th>
<th>Male (%)</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction and development</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and criminal matters</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elections</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical issues</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judicial systems</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural disasters</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public safety</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social issues</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism and recreation</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare and social services</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The coverage of male governors was more likely to focus on agriculture, the economy, energy, the environment, social issues, tourism, trade, and welfare and social services than the coverage of female governors. On the other hand, the coverage of female governors was more likely to focus on construction and development, crime, elections, ethical issues, governance, immigration, judicial systems, the military, natural disasters, public safety, and transportation. However, the biggest differences were found in healthcare and education. Both healthcare and education were covered more frequently for male governors than their female counterparts.
These results suggest that the news article coverage of male governors focused on both stereotypical feminine and masculine issues. For example, the male sample included more coverage about stereotypical feminine issues like education, health, social issues, the environment, and welfare along with stereotypical masculine issues like agriculture, the economy, energy, and trade. In contrast, the coverage of female governors was more likely to focus on stereotypical masculine issues as well as gender-neutral topics. For example, the female sample included more coverage of stereotypical masculine issues like development, crime, immigration, judicial systems, the military, and transportation as well as such gender-neutral topics as elections, ethics, governance, and natural disasters. Public safety was the only stereotypical feminine issue that was covered more for female governors than male.

**Personal frames**

Personal frames are concerned with aspects of the governor as individuals including their personal or professional backgrounds. Personal references included discussions of appearance, family, marital status, personality, background, qualifications, age, and pregnancy. The results suggest that news article coverage was more likely to use personal frames to describe female governors compared with their male counterparts. Of the paragraphs written about female governors, 7.6% used a personal frame compared with 6.4% for male governors.

Statistically significant differences were found in the types of personal frames used for male and female governors, $\chi^2(8, N = 2,323) = 232.32, p = .00$. (see Table 6). The personal frames used when covering female governors were more likely to focus on personality, family, appearance, and age than for male governors. Of these types of
personal frames, the most noteworthy differences between male and female governors were in appearance and personality. Appearance and personality were not only covered more frequently for female governors, but the nature of the coverage also differed between males and females.

Table 6: Personal Frame: Male and Female Governors Compared

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Male (%)</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appearance</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of appearance, the governors’ clothing was the most frequently discussed aspect for both male and female governors. The following examples demonstrate the many ways in which the attire of governors was described: Governor Sonny Perdue “wearing a black polo shirt, khaki pants, a Waffle House visor and a glowing neon necklace” (Sugiura, 2006); “Democratic Gov. Kathleen Sebelius accepted victory Tuesday night in a blue suit - the color of the evening” (Hollingsworth, 2006); “Sporting
a Red Sox cap and an upbeat demeanor, Governor Deval Patrick walked out of Massachusetts General Hospital” (Guilfoil, 2009); and, Governor Walker “favors red suits in debates to distinguish herself when sharing the podium with her seven male challengers, who form a uniform row of blue” (Harrie, 2004).

For female governors, their attire was only one aspect of their appearance that was covered; everything from their hair, to their lipstick, to their beauty, to their accessories was open for discussion. The following examples demonstrate the many ways in which additional elements of appearance were discussed for female governors: regarding Governor Granholm, “her no-nonsense oratory, centrist politics and movie-star good looks have Democrats looking to her as their party's savior” (Weeks, 2002); of Governor Palin, “walk into F Street Station and check out the chalkboard used to share quotes and quips. Last week's offering is guaranteed to become a bumper sticker before long: ‘Alaska -- The coldest state with the hottest governor’” (Bragg, 2006); of Governor Rell, “one visitor, Douglas Dumas of Manchester, told her she is ‘absolutely beautiful’” (Dempsey, 2004); and, regarding Governor Swift’s hair, “it's sprayed to death, it's completely pushed back off her face, and it looks hard. It looks constructed. Her lip line's really hard, and she definitely has more on than she usually does” (Weiss, 2001). These examples highlight how additional aspects of a governor’s appearance were discussed for female governors.

In addition to appearance, the references to personality also differed between males and females, not only in frequency but also in substance. Female governors were described using a much broader array of personality and character traits than male governors. Females were more likely described possessing traditional feminine traits,
such as being “caring,” “emotional,” “graceful,” “pleasant,” “sweet,” “warm,” and “honest” than male governors. The following examples demonstrate the many ways in which traditionally feminine traits were used to describe female governors: regarding Governor Brewer, “I got to know a side of the governor that I didn't expect. I found her to be a very warm, pleasant and genuine person” (“Local artist”, 2011); of Governor Beverly Perdue, “She's such a sweet lady, not shy at all” (“Perdue to students”, 2010); and regarding Governor Rell, “She may be honest, caring and likeable, but she’s also inexplicably incurious” (Jacklin, 2005). The adjectives “warm,” “sweet,” and “caring” are traditionally associated with feminine traits and were often used to describe the female governors.

Even though traditionally feminine traits were used in conjunction with female governors, these women were also frequently described possessing traditionally masculine traits such as being “tough,” “strong,” “self-confident,” “aggressive,” and “competent.” The following examples demonstrate the many ways in which traditionally masculine traits were used to describe female governors: Governor Gregoire “is a strong, competent leader” (Balter, 2008); Governor Swift was praised for, “her tough and relentless campaign skills as a state senator, lieutenant governor, and governor” (Phillips, 2002); and of Governor Haley, “voters believe Haley has the steel to make tough choices on state spending and serve as a check on legislative power” (O’Connor, 2010a). The words “strong,” “tough,” and “steel” are traditionally associated with masculine traits but were also used to describe the female governors.

In contrast to how female governors were described, the traits used to describe male governors were more limited in scope. Males were more likely described as
“charismatic,” “hardworking,” and “ambitious” than their female counterparts. These traits are often associated with stereotypical masculine qualities. The following examples highlight some of the ways the personality and character traits of male governors were described: regarding Governor Sandoval, “the newly elected governor’s popularity lies with his personal charisma” (Spillman, 2011); Governor Parnell was described as “hardworking, pragmatic, and above all, dependable” (Erickson, 2009); of Governor Easley, “he can be charming, flashing a wide grin, offering uncanny impersonations…behaving as if there’s nothing he’d rather be doing” (Griffin, 2004); and Governor Heineman “learned the value of discipline, hard work and the need to focus” (Tysver, 2006). Male governors were predominantly described using traditionally masculine adjectives.

As the previous discussion shows, different personality and character descriptors were used to describe male and female governors. However, it is important to note that some traits were used to describe both male and female governors. Leadership and speaking style were two aspects of personality and character frequently discussed for both male and female governors. Governors were often described as a “leader” or possessing strong “leadership abilities” or “leadership qualities.” In addition, the speaking style or communicating skills of a governor were also frequently discussed. News article coverage often described the abilities of governors to communicate with audiences as well as the effectiveness of their communicating styles.

My analysis indicates that the personal frames used when covering female governors were more likely to focus on personality, family, appearance, and age than for male governors with particularly noteworthy differences in how personality and
appearance were covered. In comparison, the coverage of male governors was much more likely to focus on qualifications than for female governors (23.9% vs. 16.4%). These paragraphs included descriptions of previous jobs and professional accomplishments. However, even though the frequency differed for male and female governors, the substance of paragraphs that discussed qualifications did not. The most frequently mentioned qualifications for both male and female governors were their past political careers. In the following example, the *Omaha World Herald* listed the many political positions Governor Heineman occupied before becoming governor:

> He was chief of staff to former U.S. Rep. Hal Daub, office manager for former U.S. Rep. Doug Bereuter, and state GOP chairman. A former state treasurer and Fremont City Council member, he was Mike Johanns' lieutenant governor and stepped up when Johanns became U.S. secretary of agriculture in January 2005 (Reed, 2006).

Previous positions were listed in the same manner for Governor Richardson, “a former New Mexico congressman, served as U.N. ambassador and then as U.S. energy secretary during the Clinton administration” (Coleman, 2008), and Governor Brewer, “the former state representative, former state senator and former county supervisor” (“Snapshots of the next governor”, 2008).

In addition to simply listing past political positions, accomplishments while in these positions were frequently covered. The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* highlighted Governor Sonny Perdue’s legislative accomplishments as a state senator as follows:

> As a state senator, Perdue helped steer more than $4 million to the aviation museum at Warner Robins, in his home county. Part of that was $450,000 in state
funds to build MissionQuest, a flight-simulation center the museum uses to teach kids teamwork and leadership (Sabulis, 2002).

Likewise, Governor Blanco’s accomplishments as lieutenant governor were described as follows: “during her eight years as lieutenant governor, the Louisiana travel industry has grown from a $6.5 billion to a $9 billion industry and has created 21,000 jobs, increases for which Blanco claimed credit” (Scott, 2003).

Another way in which news article coverage of governors discussed qualifications was to highlight experience in the legal sector. The following examples highlight the many ways in which news article coverage discussed the legal careers of both male and female governors: Governor Napolitano “decided to stay in the Valley and worked for a decade in public practice for the Lewis & Roca law firm” (“Napolitano aims to be first”, 2006); Governor Easley “became the top prosecutor for Brunswick, Bladen and Columbus counties at 31, six years after passing the bar exam” (Griffin, 2004); and, Governor Martinez “received her law degree from the University of Oklahoma in 1986 and went to work in New Mexico as an assistant district attorney” (Massey, 2010). All of these examples show how news article coverage mentioned past legal careers when highlighting the qualifications of governors.

In addition to discussing the governors’ careers in the political and legal sectors, there were several mentions of careers within the private sector. In the following example, the Boston Globe discussed Governor Patrick’s former experience in the private sector as well as his earnings:

When he joined the ACC Capital board in August 2004, Patrick was getting ready to leave his post at Coca-Cola after nearly four years on the job. In December
2004, he collected a $3.1 million severance agreement from Coca-Cola. According to Securities and Exchange Commission filings, his annual salary was $1.5 million in 2001 and rose to $2 million in 2004, his last year at the firm.

Patrick, who was previously general counsel at Texaco, had accumulated about $2 million in Coca-Cola stock (Phillips, 2010).

Previous private sector experience was covered in a similar way for Governor Benson: “he's the co-founder of Cabletron Systems, which became Enterasys Networks, where he was a member of the audit committee. He also sat on the boards of Babson College and Pipal Systems (“Benson will disclose finances”, 2003); and Governor Scott, “as CEO of the country’s largest hospital chain, Rick Scott earned a reputation for setting aggressive cost-saving goals and constantly monitoring the progress” (Bender, 2010).

Another important difference within the personal frame was in the “other” category. The coverage of male governors was more likely to contain a personal frame with an “other” subtype than female governors (25.6% vs. 12.2%). Upon further analysis of these results, the only difference between the male and female governors in terms of this category was in frequency rather than content. It appears that the same types of things were discussed for both the male and female governors, but more so for the men. The two most frequently occurring subjects for this category were the governor’s health and the governor’s personal assets or wealth.

Most of the coverage about a governor’s health described medical treatments he or she was receiving while in office. The following examples demonstrate the ways in which a governor’s health was discussed: “To fix a back problem, Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton is going under a surgeon's knife next week, which will keep him out of the public
eye well into the New Year” (Stasssen-Berger & Walsh, 2012); “Gov. Jennifer Granholm is ‘recovering and resting comfortably’ but will be hospitalized for about a week following emergency surgery Tuesday night to treat a bowel obstruction, aides said Wednesday (Hornbeck, 2008); “Arizona Gov. Janet Napolitano was resting comfortably Wednesday after having successful surgery to remove an ovarian cyst and her right ovary” (“Napolitano undergoes surgery”, 2004); “Gov. Joe Manchin underwent successful knee replacement surgery Saturday at Cabell Huntington Hospital” (“Governor undergoes surgery”, 2006); and, “the breast tumor removed from Gov. M. Jodi Rell was 2 centimeters or less in diameter, and her lymph nodes tested as cancer-free, the governor's office said late Tuesday” (Pazniokas, 2004). These examples highlight some of the many different types of medical conditions found in news article coverage of both male and female governors.

The second most frequently occurring subject within the “other” category described a governor’s wealth or personal assets. The following examples demonstrate how wealth and personal assets were discussed: “Gov. Mark Dayton made $671,724 last year from his investments, according to the governor's newly filed tax returns” (Helgeson, 2011a); Governor Sarah Palin’s “home in Wasilla, a 2.13-acre parcel, is assessed at $550,000, according to borough records” (White, 2007); Governor Patrick “could be making more than $30,000 a month in mortgage payments on their two properties” (Estes & Helman, 2009); and, “the income of Gov. Nikki Haley and first gentleman Michael Haley rose sharply in 2011 – because of nearly $200,000 in book royalties paid to the Republican governor for her memoir – and so did the couple's tax bill” (Smith, 2012b).
Even though differences were found in most of the personal frame subtypes, virtually no differences were found between male and female governors in terms of the personal coverage surrounding their marital status and background. For the male sample, 13.4% of personal frames mentioned their marital status compared with 13.2% for the female sample. Likewise, the differences in discussions of a governor’s background were also small with 6.5% for the male sample and 6.9% for the female sample. It is also worth noting that none of the personal frames for the male governors received a pregnancy subtype as no male governors were expecting a child during their terms in office. However, Governor Palin and Governor Swift were both pregnant during their tenure as governor, and therefore, paragraphs that discussed their pregnancy or the birth of their children were coded with the pregnancy subtype.

Overall, the findings suggest that news article coverage was more likely to use personal frames to describe female governors than male. The coverage of female governors was more likely to focus on personality, family, appearance and age than for male governors. The most significant differences were found in personality and qualifications. The coverage of females was significantly more likely to focus on personality discussions whereas; the coverage of male governors was much more likely to focus on qualifications. In addition, the coverage of male governors was more likely to contain a personal frame with an “other” subtype than female governors. This indicates that the health and wealth of male governors were more frequently discussed than for female governors.

Gendered frames

When news articles use gendered frames, notions of gender are brought into the foreground of coverage. In order to determine if a paragraph contained a gendered frame,
coders looked for references to specific gendered terms, gender roles, metaphors or analogies with a gender component, and the use of gender stereotypes. The gendered frame could be used to describe both female and male governors. However, the analysis suggests that, similar to the use of personal frames, gendered frames were used more in the coverage of female governors than their male counterparts. Of the paragraphs written about female governors, 1.7% used a gendered frame, whereas only 0.06% of the paragraphs about men did.

The gendered coverage in this study consistently took one of three possible forms. Coverage that contained gendered frames discussed leadership breakthroughs, used words that highlighted the gender of the politician, and incorporated gender stereotypes. Even though gendered frames were used much more frequently for females than males, there were important differences and similarities in the content of this coverage.

The first pattern found in news article coverage that contained a gendered frame was references to leadership breakthroughs. Female governors were constantly being referred to as the “first” to assume the chief executive position of their state. This was followed by their gender, being either a “woman” or a “female.” The following examples highlight how newspapers discussed these leadership breakthroughs: “Benefiting from voters upset with what they see as an overreaching federal government, Republican Mary Fallin on Tuesday was elected the state's first female governor” (McNutt & Baldwin, 2010); “Susana Martinez will become one of 35 women in U.S. history to take office as a governor when she is sworn in today, and she will become the first elected female chief executive in New Mexico's 98 years of statehood” (Simonich, 2010); and, “Democrat Kathleen Blanco made history Saturday, becoming the first woman to be elected
governor of Louisiana, overcoming Republican Bobby Jindal with a furious rush in a
hard-fought runoff” (Scott, 2003). In these examples, the newly elected governor was
described as not only “female” but the “first” female governor of their states.

These references to leadership breakthroughs did not change over time. For example, the coverage of Governors Fallin and Martinez in 2012 was just as likely to
include “first female” discussions as the coverage of Governors Granholm and Blanco in
2003. In addition, for some governors, these leadership breakthrough references did not
change over the course of their tenure as governor. For example, in the coverage
surrounding Governor Beverly Perdue, the first female frame was used in articles written
after her election in 2008 as well as in articles four years later in 2012.

In comparison, there were no discussions of leadership breakthroughs for male
governors. In addition, there was only one reference to a male governor being “male.”
Governor Easley was described as a “white male Democrat lawyer from Eastern North
Carolina” (Betts, 2001). Compared to the term “female,” the term “male” was not used
in news article coverage.

Often when leadership breakthroughs were discussed, newspapers also
emphasized the progress women have made in politics and how female governors are role
models to young women. Discussions of progress usually centered on overcoming
gender bias or gender barriers. The following illustrates how progress was discussed in
news article coverage:

“Obviously, Mary Fallin's election as the first female governor is historic.
Nothing even close to that has happened” said Bob Blackburn, director of the
Oklahoma Historical Society. “Women have been making steady progress and
society is adapting, and Mary Fallin represents a major leap forward.” (Murphy, 2011)

In this example, the election of Governor Fallin is viewed as “steady progress” for women and politics. The following excerpt about Governor Blanco is another example of how progress was discussed: “Councilwoman Renee Gill Pratt said Blanco’s election made her proud to be a woman and an American, ‘because in some places women cannot vote and women can never reach their desired dreams’” (Donze, 2004). Here the progress women have made in politics in America is compared to the lack of progress in other countries.

In addition to discussions about progress, the gendered coverage of female governors also highlighted how these women serve as role models. In the following examples, the female governors were described as “role models” for other women: “while she discounts the personal significance of being the first female governor, Governor Lingle is mindful of her position as a role model for girls and women” (Dingeman, 2002); “Swift is a role model - an example that motherhood can mix with career” (Klein, 2001); “Martinez was the role model New Mexico women need” (Simonich, 2011b); “Stephanie Hathorn, a fifth-grader at Apache Elementary School, said Fallin is a good role model for girls” (McNutt, 2011b); and of Governor Walker, “she has made state history already and stands tall as a role model for girls and women. In these days when cynicism sometimes rules, Utah's governor can inspire others to see public service as a laudable and attainable career (“2003 Utahn of the year”, 2003). In these examples, the female governors were described as role models for girls and women
because they attained a career in public service, became the first female governor of their state, and for some did all of this while also being a mother.

However, it is important to note that not all discussions of progress were positive. In some cases, despite leadership breakthroughs, the lack of progress that women have made in politics was discussed. The following paragraph highlights the feelings of some after Governor Walker assumed the office of governor after the previous governor resigned:

Already, some Republicans have questioned whether the lieutenant governor can legally assume the top office along with its duties, a sign that not everyone is as comfortable with her as she is with herself. It could be a case of constitutional nitpicking, or, as one Democrat suggested, gender bias. Or maybe it's fear of the unknown. (Fantin, 2003)

This excerpt suggests that while the election of some female governors was an indication of forward progress, the lack of comfort with the succession of Governor Walker could be evidence of gender bias. The Arizona Republic offers another example of the lack of progress in the following excerpt quoting a pollster: “There's a need to display women in the party in prominent roles; women are still viewed as relatively new arrivals in politics” (“Dems pick Napolitano”, 2004). The quote indicates that despite the progress female governors have made, they are still viewed by some as newcomers to the political world. News article coverage of male governors never mentioned progress or overcoming gender bias. There were also no discussions of male politicians being role models for other males.
A second pattern found in news article coverage that contained a gendered frame was using words that highlighted the gender of the politician. One of the most frequently occurring words used to describe female politicians was *lady*. For example, Governor Rell was labeled as, “the lady from Virginia, known for her Southern charm” (Simpson, 2004) and Governor Brewer was described as a “nice lady with carefully styled hair and a slight challenge with the English language” (“Goddard’s real foe”, 2010). These examples illustrate how journalists directly used the term “lady” in their coverage. In many cases, newspapers quoted others using the term *lady*. In the following example, the Arizona Republic quoted the state attorney general following Governor Brewer’s first State of the State address: “That poor lady. I’m very disappointed in the tone and the lack of a plan,” said state Attorney General Terry Goddard, a Democrat. “It was divisive, and it was small-minded.” (“Brewer calls for unity”, 2010). Not only was “lady” used in this excerpt but the governor was described as being a “poor” lady for not having a clear plan for the legislative session.

Journalists also quoted constituents talking about their governor: “it seems like now we have a lady who's trying to show her face in Charlotte more, but I'm not sure she's taking the message back [Governor Beverly Perdue]” (Johnson, 2009); “oh, the new lady, Janet something [Governor Napolitano]” (“Building a new Arizona”, 2003); “she's a great lady, very bright, wants to do what's best for Alaska [Governor Palin]” (Hopkins, 2006); “she’s such a sweet lady [Governor Beverly Perdue]” (“Perdue to students”, 2010); “this lady just makes stuff up [Governor Haley]” (Smith, 2012a); and, “she was a really classy lady [Governor Swift]” (Abraham, 2002). All of these examples are direct quotations from constituents that use the word *lady* to refer to their female governor.
In addition to *lady*, other words were used that indicated the gender of the female governors. The news article coverage of Governor Palin, in particular, included the broadest array of these types of words. For example, paragraphs about Governor Palin referred to her as a “goddess,” (Cockerham, 2008) “homegirl,” (“Palin stumps for GOP candidate”, 2008) and “special gal” (Kizzia, 2008).

Journalists also used gender qualifiers for male governors. For example, Governor Barbour was called a “good ol’ boy” (Pender, 2004) and Governor Sonny Perdue was described as a “good old country boy” (Sabulis, 2002) and a “small-town boy” (Salzer, 2005). In addition to *boy*, *guy* was another term used for male governors. Governor Sandoval was called a “nice guy” (Spillman, 2011), Governor Kernan, a “regular guy” (“Indiana’s next governor”, 2004), Governor Dayton, a “great guy” (Helgeson, 2011b), and Governor Richardson, a “humble guy” (Linthicum, 2007).

A final pattern found in news article coverage that contained a gendered frame was relying upon gender stereotypes to frame male and female governors. Journalist wrote about female politicians using both discussions of stereotypical gender roles as well as metaphors that invoke them. The most frequently employed gender role for female governors was that of a mother. Journalists activated the mother role explicitly in ways like this for Governor Brewer, “she has a tremendous amount of common sense -it's the wisdom of a mom” (“Governor’s fortitude”, 2010) and Governor Rell, “that approach is what landed the former homemaker and PTA mom in the state's most powerful job” (Simpson, 2004). Activation of the mother role was often done implicitly like in the following example describing Governor Blanco: “This is her baby to rock. She has to make it work.” (Maggi, 2005). In this example, Governor Blanco’s legislative agenda
was compared with the very nurturing, motherly act of rocking a baby. In another example, the *Times Picayune* quoted Natural Resource Secretary Scott Angelle’s discussing Governor Blanco:

> Angelle said he didn't always agree with Blanco's distinctly maternal agenda, including a ban on smoking in restaurants (which passed) and junk food in public schools (which was watered down), and the reinstatement of the requirement that motorcycle riders to wear helmets. But, he said, “That's what happens when you elect June Cleaver.” (Grace, 2007)

In this paragraph, the mother role was evoked by describing Governor Blanco’s legislative agenda as “maternal” and by comparing her to June Cleaver, a 1950s fictional TV character known for being a homemaker, wife, and mother.

As an extension of the mother role, the grandmother role was also activated in news article coverage particularly for Governor Walker. The following examples illustrate some of the many ways her role as a grandmother was made salient: “her grandmotherly image is something she has to overcome” (Fantin, 2003); “Utah's new governor shows a lot of spunk for a 72-year-old great-grandmother” (Harrie, 2003); and, “it was typical Walker style: part politician, part grandmother, part neighbor next door” (Burr, 2004).

Female governors were also framed as wives. As with the role of mother, this was often done by explicitly stating this role. For example, Governor Blanco “appealed to voters by showing her human side -- wife, mother of six, grandmother -- and making the most of her maturity and political accomplishments” (Scott, 2013), Governor Swift is a “woman, a wife, and the mother of a toddler and 3-month-old twins” (Vennochi, 2001),
and Governor Haley was described by the Romney campaign as “a military wife” (“What will Gov. Haley say”, 2012). In the following example, Governor Palin was actually referred to as “the wife”: “Not to mention the wife getting elected Alaska chief executive in November” (White, 2007). The activation of the stereotypical gender roles of mother, grandmother, and wife was one pattern found in the news article coverage of female governors.

Gender roles were also discussed for male governors, though to a much lesser extent. The predominant role that appeared in the coverage of male governors was that of a father. For example, a history professor was quoted as saying the following about Governor Dayton: “He will use his sons to connect to the larger community. We will see him more as a father, where former governors were known more for being husbands.” (Tillotson, 2011). Likewise, a constituent was quoted as saying this about Governor Patrick: “It's wonderful to see a father love his daughter like that. It's beautiful.” (Schworm, 2008). In both of these quotes, the role of father was brought to the foreground of the coverage. Again, it is important to note that journalists described female governors using frames of gender roles much more frequently than for male governors, but when gender roles were mentioned for men, the role of father was the predominant one discussed.

Another way in which stereotypical notions of gender were used to frame governors was simply through the activation of stereotypes about men and women. For example, the following paragraph about Governor Brewer highlights stereotypical activities associated with women: “she can be affable and charming, bouncing easily from subjects ranging from gardening to shopping, but has been known to flub her words
during news conferences and other events, a tendency that has resulted in some negative publicity” (“From fill-in to front-runner”, 2010). In this example, the journalist has chosen to comment on Governor Brewer’s ability to easily discuss gardening and shopping, activities typically associated with women. It can be assumed that the Governor also can easily discuss such stereotypical masculine topics such as the economy or foreign policy because of her position as chief executive officer of the state but these topics were not mentioned in the article.

Another example of the activation of stereotypes about women is found in the following excerpt from the Detroit News about Governor Granholm:

Karen Barta, 51, a homemaker from Allen Park, believes Michigan's first female governor is a strong, positive figure for young girls to emulate. “She's a good role model, she dresses appropriately. I'd rather have young girls see her as a role model than, say, Madonna or Britney Spears,” Barta said. (Hornbeck, 2003)

In this example, the newspaper quoted a constituent who speaks positively about Governor Granholm because she believes she is a good role model for young girls. However, she was described as a role model not because she’s the chief executive officer of the state and a powerful female leader but because she “dresses appropriately” compared with pop icons. In this example, traditional stereotypes of women that focus on appearance were used to discuss Governor Granholm rather than her leadership abilities or her intelligence.

A final example of how gender stereotypes were activated in the coverage of female governors was found in a news article about Governor Walker. A journalist in the Salt Lake Tribune wrote, “inquiring minds always want to know the important "first
woman details: Did she cry under pressure? Can she balance her job and breast-feeding? Do her shoes match her dress? Did she properly blot her lipstick? (Mullen, 2003). Even though the journalist who wrote this article was reminding her audience that there is more to Governor Walker than the “first woman” lens applied to women in power, she still evokes gender stereotypes of women by discussing what others will report in their coverage. These stereotypes of women included them being emotional, constantly juggling career and family, and being overly concerned about their appearance.

The coverage of male governors contained very few gender stereotypes. Of the few that were found, the stereotypes about male governors were often embedded in the context of sports analogies. For example, Governor Heineman “strode off the bench to quarterback team Nebraska” (Hammel, 2009a) and Governor Richardson was described as “not a lightweight” but a “professional boxer, and he’s fought a lot of battles” (Jones, 2007). In these examples, Governor Heineman as governor of Nebraska was compared to a football quarterback leading his team and Governor Richardson pushing his legislative agenda was compared to a boxer fighting his opponents. However, stereotypes like these were used infrequently compared with the gender stereotypes used in the coverage of female governors.

It is worth noting that some of the gendered frames used in the coverage of male and female governors were found within the governors’ own discourse. Unlike the previous examples in which journalists activated gendered references either through their own words or through quotes from others, gender stereotypes and gender roles were also used by governors themselves. Female governors were often quoted using words and phrases that highlighted their gender. For example, Governor Granholm was reported as
calling herself “one tough broad,” (Weeks, 2002) Governor Walker referred to herself as an “old lady,” (Walsh, 2004) Governor Haley was quoted as calling herself “the girl,” (Beam, 2012) and Governor Fallin called herself “a skirt” (Dean, 2010). In these examples, the governors used the words broad, lady, girl, and skirt to describe themselves.

Like journalists, the female governors in this study also highlighted their role as a mother and acknowledged their leadership breakthroughs. For example, Governor Palin described herself as “your average hockey mom,” (Hunter, 2008) Governor Brewer said, “I’m an elected official but – first and foremost – I’m a mother,” (“Brewer Oks child abuse unit”, 2012) and Governor Fallin was quoted as saying, “the unique experience that I'll have as the first woman governor is balancing a woman's and a mother's activities in a family” (McNutt, 2011a). Female governors also referenced their own leadership breakthroughs and being a role model to young girls. For example, Governor Swift was quoted as saying, “To be the first woman in this job is particularly gratifying. I cherish the wide-eyed looks I get from young girls” (Abraham, 2002) and Governor Walker said, “I hope I’m leaving a steppingstone for other young woman” (Harrie, 2003).

Likewise, male governors also highlighted their role as a father. For example, Governor Sonny Perdue called himself “a legislator, a businessman, father” (Sabulis, 2002) and Governor Benson discussed his role as a father and husband in the following excerpt:

I happen to believe I could do two things well. One is to be a business person, and more importantly a family person. If I started spending a lot more time away from home than I needed to, then I was taking away from my ability to be a good
father and a good husband. I really want to do that well. I knew too many successful business people who got divorced along the way. They'd win the business war and lose the family war, and I don't think that was a good trade. My most important job on earth is to be a good husband for Denise, and a good father for Lauren and Kristen. (Wickham, 2004)

In these examples, both Governors Perdue and Benson highlighted their roles through their own words. However, it is important to note that there were very few examples of this in the coverage of male governors. These gender roles were rarely discussed by either the governors themselves or by journalists.

Finally, female governors were quoted discussing the differences between male and female governors. For example, Governor Swift was quoted discussing what it is like being a female governor:

“It's the hardest question: What is it like to be a woman governor? Well, what's my point of comparison? I've never been a man governor. I never will be. Do I think there are (gender) issues that need to be explored? Absolutely. How society reacts to the media's coverage of women,” she said. (Cassidy, 2002).

Likewise, in the following quote, Governor Lingle joked about these differences: “Lingle said she hasn't given much thought to how being a woman governor is different from any other governor. ‘I always have to have extra panty hose with me,’ she said with a smile” (Dingeman, 2002). No male governors addressed the differences between male and female governors.

As the preceding examples illustrate, similar to journalists, female governors activated gendered references much more frequently than male governors by using words
that highlighted their gender, by referencing their role as mothers, by acknowledging their leadership breakthroughs, and by discussing the differences between male and female governors. However, it is important to recognize that even though these women made gendered references, the newspapers were the ones who decided to include these quotations in their coverage.

Overall, the coverage of female governors contained more gendered frames compared with the coverage of male governors. These frames included references to leadership breakthroughs for women, using words that highlighted the gender of male and female governors, and relying upon gender stereotypes including gender roles to describe the politicians. In addition, stereotypical notions of gender were also activated through the governors’ own discourse.

Strategy frames

Strategy frames are commonly used during campaigns and are concerned with who is running, who is ahead, the tactics used to get votes, discussions of campaign finances and overall campaign strategies. This study extended this typical definition to also include strategy discussions that occur after Election Day. These discussions focus on job approval ratings, the governor’s overall popularity, performance assessments, and the governor’s long term political viability. Overall, the findings suggest that strategy frames were used more in the coverage of female governors than in the coverage of their male counterparts. Of the paragraphs written about female governors, 13.9% were strategy frames compared with 13.5% for male governors.

Even though the coverage of female governors contained slightly more strategy frames, there were little differences in the content of these strategy discussions. The strategy coverage in this study consistently took one of three possible forms for both male
and female governors. First, strategy frames were often used immediately following Election Day during the governor-elect period. During this time, news article coverage typically used strategy frames to describe campaign outcomes. For example, in an article following the election of Governor Barbour, the *Sun Herald* wrote, “Harrison, Jackson, Rankin, DeSoto, Madison and other populous, more urbanized counties helped Barbour seal his victory in what had been a neck-and-neck race throughout most of the campaign” (Pender, 2003). Descriptions like this one that focused on where the candidates received votes were common following Election Day. Strategy frames were also used after Election Day to describe how the candidates won as illustrated in the following excerpt about Governor Haley:

To win, Haley developed much of her campaign's message herself and relied on a tight-knit group of advisers. She also tapped into a network of activists early who supported her push for more on-the-record legislative votes. From there, Haley's campaign built on its mantra for supporters to tell 10 friends about what she had said. (O'Connor, 2010b).

This example shows how news article coverage frequently used strategy frames to discuss the success and failure of campaign strategies. Finally, strategy coverage after Election Day also included general predictions about the governor-elect’s tenure. For example, in an article after the election of Governor Richardson, the *Albuquerque Journal* wrote, “If Richardson uses his considerable influence and political skills to advance the interests of New Mexico during his tenure as governor as he has pledged to do the state stands to reap tremendous advantages” (Coleman, 2002). As this example
illustrates, strategy frames were commonly used to predict the success of a governor based upon his or her campaign promises.

The second pattern found in this coverage was the use of strategy frames during re-election campaigns typically by describing who was winning and losing, often citing specific poll numbers. For example, Governor Benson was described as holding “a 49 to 28 percent lead over former Attorney General Philip McLaughlin and a 49 to 25 percent lead over House Minority Leader Peter Burling, among likely voters” (“Poll”, 2004), and Governor Granholm’s “lead over Republican challenger Dick DeVos is narrowing as the heated race for governor heads into its final, star-studded weekend” (Hornbeck, 2006).

Strategy frames during re-election campaigns were also used to describe campaign finances including cash-on-hand totals and donor contributions. For example, Governor Lingle “had raised $6.2 million in donations, interest and other income by mid-September” (“Iwase runs”, 2006) and Governor Herbert “has raised several times as much for his campaign as all of his Republican challengers combined, with nearly $1 out of every $6 in donations coming from oil, gas, oil shale and other energy interests” (Gehrke, 2012). Finally, strategy frames used during re-election campaigns discussed the activities and strategies of the campaigns including campaign commercials, debates, fundraising events, and get-out-the-vote efforts. For example, the following about Governor Kernan illustrates how campaign strategies were discussed: “Gov. Joe Kernan's campaign will continue running an ad touting Indiana's job growth -- even though revised state job numbers announced Friday contradict the commercial's positive message” (“This just in”, 2004).
A final pattern found in the use of strategy frames was general assessments of a governor’s tenure. This included public approval ratings and overall popularity. The following excerpt from the *Charlotte Observer* is a typical example:

Easley, with less than three years to run on his eight-year lease on the governor's mansion, is enjoying continued popularity. His approval numbers range in the high 50s and low 60s, remarkable for a Democrat who continued to win in a state that often leans Republican, at least in federal races. (“Black, ally Easley”, 2006)

In addition to popularity, a governor’s long term political viability and future career goals were also frequently discussed. For example, the *Anchorage Daily News* discussed Governor Palin’s future in the following paragraph: “No matter what comes next -- impeachment for abuse of power, elevation as vice president or merely two or six more years of being governor -- Palin has secured a prominent and permanent place in Alaska history” (Erickson, 2008).

In summary, news articles use personal, gendered, and strategy frames differently when covering male and female governors. The coverage of female governors was more likely to focus on their personality, family, appearance and age as well as reference their leadership breakthroughs, and activate gender stereotypes. Personal, gendered, and strategy frames were used more in the coverage of female governors than for male governors. Therefore, H7 was supported.

*Transition periods and frames*

Unlike previous research that limits the analysis to the beginning of a politician’s term in office, this study sought to examine a governor’s entire tenure to determine if there were any changes in coverage over time. In order to do this, the key dates in each
governor’s time in office were recorded. These dates included the day after their
election, their inauguration, the beginning of their campaign, and the election of their
successor. These dates are referred to as transitional periods that reflect changes in a
governor’s status while in office. Each paragraph received a code based upon its
publication date that corresponded to the transition period.

Of the total sample, the majority of articles were written during the governor’s
term in office (65%). The second most frequently occurring timeframe was the campaign
season (21.1%). The governor-elect and lame duck transition periods make up the rest
of the articles with 5.5% and 2.5% respectively. The recount (0.4%), governor in waiting
(1.6%) and campaign for national office (3.8%) were special transitional periods in that
they only applied to certain governors (see Codebook in Appendix for details).

In order to answer the first research question, the differences and similarities
between how male and female governors were framed during the transition periods were
examined. The first transition period analyzed was governor-elect. This time period
began the day after the election and ended the day before the governor was inaugurated
into office. The findings suggest that news article coverage used frames differently for
male and female governors during the governor-elect period. The differences between
the frames used for male and female governors during this time were statistically
significant, $\chi^2(4, N = 2,645) = 151.89$, $p = .00$.

Within the governor-elect period, news article coverage was significantly more
likely to use issue frames for male governors. During this time period, 61% of the
paragraphs about male governors were issue frames, whereas only 39.7% were for female
governors. In contrast, paragraphs about female governors were more likely to contain
personal, strategy, and gendered frames than the coverage of male governors. Of the paragraphs written about female governors during the governor-elect period, 14.4% contained personal frames compared with 9.7% for male governors; 24.6% contained strategy frames compared with only 13.0% for male governors; and 4.6% contained gendered frames, whereas only 0.06% did for the male sample.

The second transition period analyzed was the term. This time period began the day the governor was inaugurated into office and ended at the beginning of the campaign season. This period continued again immediately following the re-election of the governor until the election of his or her successor. The findings suggest differences also exist in the frames used for male and female governors during the term period. The differences were statistically significant, $\chi^2(4, N = 30,355) = 127.99$, $p = .00$.

During this time period, males were more likely than females to receive issue frame coverage. Of the male sample, 75.4% of the coverage during their term contained issue frames, whereas 72.1% did so for the female sample. Females were more likely to receive personal and gendered coverage than their male counterparts. Of the paragraphs about female governors, 6.3% contained personal frames, whereas 5.5% did for male governors. Likewise, 1.3% of the paragraphs about females during their term contained gendered frames compared with 0.08% for male governors. Male and female governors received the same amount of strategy frame coverage (10.2%).

The third transition period analyzed was the campaign season. The campaign season began the day the governor announced he or she would run for another term in office and ended on Election Day or the day the governor failed to receive his or her party’s nomination. Again, the results suggest important differences between how male
and female governors were framed during the campaign season. The differences between male and female governors during this time were statistically significant, \( \chi^2(4, N = 10,031) = 96.65, p = .00 \).

During the campaign season, the coverage of female governors was more likely to focus on issues compared with their male counterparts. Of the coverage about women, 59.4% contained issue frames, whereas only 55.6% did for men. The coverage about female governors was also more likely to contain strategy frames than the coverage of male governors (24.7% vs. 23.8%). In addition, female governors were also more likely than males to be covered using gendered frames during this time period (1% vs. 0.03%). Finally, the coverage of male governors was more likely to contain personal references. Of the paragraphs written about the men, 7.7% were personal frames compared with 6.8% for the women.

The final transition period analyzed was the lame duck timeframe which began the day after Election Day when the governor either lost the election, or in the case that he or she did not run, a successor was declared. The lame duck period also started on the day the governor announced his or her resignation to take another position and ended on his or her last day in office. Like the other transition periods, there are important differences in how male and female governors were framed during the lame duck time period. Again, the differences in the frames used for male and female governors during this time were statistically significant, \( \chi^2(4, N = 1,374) = 46.88, p = .00 \).

During the lame duck transition period, the coverage of male governors was more likely to contain issue frames. Of the paragraphs written about the male sample, 60.7% were issues frames, whereas only 48.8% of the paragraphs about female governors
included issue discussions. In addition, the coverage of male governors was more likely to contain personal frames compared with their female counterparts (12.3% vs. 10.0%). Similar to the coverage during the campaign season, the news article coverage of female governors during the lame duck period was more likely to include strategy and gendered frames. Of the paragraphs about the female sample, 16.2% contained strategy frames and 2.7% included gendered references. In contrast, 15.5% of the news article coverage of male governors referenced strategy frames and none of their coverage was gendered.

The analysis of transition periods suggest there are important differences in how male and female governors were framed over the course of their tenure. For women, personal and gendered frames were used more frequently at the beginning and end of their administrations. Issue frames were used more frequently during their term and their re-election campaign. Finally, strategy frames were used more frequently during the governor-elect and campaign periods (see Figure 1).

![Frames by transition periods for females](image.png)

Figure 1: Frames Used During the Course of the Tenure of Female Governors
For male governors, issue frames were used the most during their term and then consistently during the other time periods. Personal frames were used the most during the beginning and end of their tenure. Strategy frames were used the most during their re-election campaigns. Finally, gendered frames were used the most during their term. The changes in how news frames were used for male governors over the course of their tenure can be viewed in Figure 2.

![Frames by transition periods for males](image)

Figure 2: Frames Used During the Course of the Tenure of Male Governors

In summary, the biggest differences in how male and female governors were framed occurred during the beginning and end of their tenures. The coverage of female governors in the beginning of their tenure was significantly less likely to contain issue discussions than males (39.7% vs. 61%). As a result, these women received more personal, strategy, and gendered coverage than their male counterparts well into the beginning of their term. However, once these women were inaugurated into office, their coverage shifted to a more issue-centered focus similar to their male counterparts.
Female governors received slightly more issue coverage and less personal coverage during their re-election campaign than male governors. However, the coverage of female governors at the end of their tenure was reminiscent of the beginning with significantly less issue coverage than their male counterparts (48.8% vs. 60.7%). Overall, this research found clear differences in how male and female governors were framed in news articles during the transition periods of their tenure.

Transition periods and tone

In order to answer the second research question, regarding the changes in tone over the course of the governors’ tenures, tone was examined across transition periods. Differences were found first in the tone of news article coverage of male and female governors in the beginning of their tenure. Female governors were more likely to receive positive coverage compared with their male counterparts in the governor-elect transition period. Of the female sample, 7.6% of the coverage they received during the governor-elect period was positive compared with 5.5% for males. Male governors were more likely to receive negative coverage in the beginning of their term. For the male sample, 4.3% of their coverage was negative, whereas only 1.7% of the news article coverage about female governors was negative. The differences in tone between male and female governors during the governor-elect period were statistically significant, \( \chi^2(3, N = 2,518) = 20.51, p = .00 \).

Differences were also found in the tone of coverage for male and female governors during their term. Female governors were more likely to receive both positive and negative coverage after their inauguration. Of the female sample, 8.8% of their coverage was negative and 4.8% was positive, whereas 7.4% of the male sample was
negative and 3.5% was positive. These differences in tone during the term period were statistically significant, $\chi^2(3, N = 29,216) = 54.21, p = .00$.

Similar to the previous transition periods, differences were found in the tone of coverage during re-election campaigns. Again, female governors were more likely to receive non-neutral coverage. The news article coverage of females was more likely to be positive and negative. Of the female sample 5.5% of the paragraphs were positive and 13.8% were negative, whereas for the male sample, 4.2% were positive and 12.4% were negative. The differences in tone between male and female governors during their campaigns were statistically significant, $\chi^2(3, N = 9,475) = 13.51, p = .004$.

Finally, differences were also found in the tone of coverage for male and female governors during the lame duck transition period. Like the campaign season, female governors received more non-neutral coverage than their male counterparts. Female governors were more likely to receive negative coverage (11.8% vs. 8.8%) as well as positive coverage (6.5% vs. 4.3%) compared with male governors. Again the differences in tone between male and female governors at the end of their tenure were statistically significant $\chi^2(3, N = 1,271) = 8.78, p = .032$.

These results suggest that the negative coverage governors received during the campaign season extended into their final weeks in office. Again, female governors were much more likely to receive non-neutral coverage than their male counterparts. Like the campaign season, this coverage was more likely to be both positive and negative compared with male governors. However, the non-neutral coverage surrounding female governors was more likely to be negative in their final days in office than positive.
Overall, important differences in the tone used in news article coverage of male and female governors over the course of their tenure were found. The coverage of female governors was more likely to be positive than male governors after Election Day. However, after inauguration, the coverage of females was consistently more positive and negative than their male counterparts through until the final days of their tenure. In addition, the coverage of females was more likely to be negative than positive and this negative coverage occurred more during the campaign and end of their tenure than during any other time in office. The changes in the tone used in the coverage of female and male governors over the course of their tenure can be viewed in Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 3: Tone Used During the Course of the Tenure of Female Governors
The preceding discussion of results indicates there are important differences in the coverage of male and female governors. Female governors receive less news coverage, less prominently placed coverage, and more opinionated coverage. In addition, news articles use more issue frames when covering male governors, however the topics in the issue coverage do not appear to follow along gender lines. News articles use more personal, gendered, and strategy frames when covering female governors. This coverage was more likely to focus on personality, family, appearance and age as well as reference leadership breakthroughs, and activate gender stereotypes. Finally, differences exist in the tone and frames used in news article coverage over transition periods. The coverage of female governors in the beginning and end of their tenure was more likely to contain non-issue frames. In addition, the coverage of female governors was more likely to be non-neutral after inauguration through until the final days of their tenure.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Previous research has shown that male and female political candidates are on an uneven playing field with women continually disadvantaged in terms of the news media coverage they receive. Female candidates receive more negative news coverage and coverage based upon traditional gender stereotypes (Aday & Devitt, 2001; Anderson, 2002; Banwart et al., 2003; Bode & Hennings, 2012; Bystrom et al., 2001; Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Devitt, 2002; Falk, 2008; Heldman et al., 2005; Scharrer, 2002). My goal was to determine if the political playing field evens out after Election Day by examining a previously overlooked area of research. The extent to which gender differences in news media coverage of male and female governors exists and changes over time was analyzed. Overall, the results from this study indicate that differences exist in the news media coverage of male and female governors with patterns of gender bias evident long after female governors assume office.

I examined both the quality and quantity of coverage as both are useful in understanding how the news media cover male and female governors. In order to assess quantity, the number of articles written about the governors, the prominence of coverage, and the types of articles written were analyzed. These aspects of quantity are all important indicators of the significance of a governor to state politics. If the news media write fewer articles about female governors and these articles are less prominently placed, readers could interpret these women as unimportant political players with minimal contributions (Carroll and Schreiber, 1997).

The results from this study in terms of quantity of coverage indicate that female governors were treated differently by the news media compared with male governors.
First, female governors received less news article coverage than their male counterparts. This finding is consistent with previous research that has found that female candidates receive less news coverage (Falk, 2008; Heldman et al., 2005; Kahn, 1992; Kahn, 1994; Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991). Second, the coverage of female governors was found to be less prominently placed. Articles about these women were more likely to appear in the local/state section, and in sections other than the first two sections of the newspaper. Finally, the coverage of female governors was more likely to contain opinion pieces and editorials than the coverage of male governors.

There are several implications associated with female governors having less overall news coverage, less prominently placed coverage, and more opinion coverage than their male counterparts. First, voter knowledge is affected. Voters are typically more likely to read the first section of a newspaper compared with subsequent sections. As a result, when the coverage of female governors appears in later sections and there is simply less overall coverage, voters may know less about the actions and accomplishments of these women in office simply because they are less likely to be exposed to this information. Second, since voters of states with female governors are exposed to more opinionated coverage, they are less able to form their own opinions about their governors. As a result, if voters have less knowledge about female governors and have been exposed to more opinionated coverage, this could negatively affect job approval ratings, public support for legislative agendas, and the future political endeavors of female governors beyond their governorships.

Although the amount, placement, and types of articles written are important measures of differences in the coverage of male and female governors, they do not reveal
the whole picture. In order to fully determine if the news media coverage of male and female governors was gender biased or gender balanced, the quality of coverage was also examined. The quality of coverage includes the actual content and substance of news article coverage. By examining the quality of coverage, we can determine what voters are actually learning about their governors. If the coverage of female governors is less substantive and more negative, then voters are learning less about their governor’s actual accomplishments in office and this negative coverage could impact their future success. Both the tone and frames used to describe the governors are aspects of the quality of coverage.

In terms of tone, the majority of news article coverage for both male and female governors was neutral. This is not surprising as journalists strive for objectivity in their reporting. Since most of the articles in this study were news stories, which tend to be more objective and balanced than opinion columns or editorials, it follows that the news coverage was overwhelmingly neutral. However, when the coverage was non-neutral, female governors were more likely to be the objects. These women received more positive and negative coverage than males, and they were also significantly more likely to receive negative than positive coverage. This finding is consistent with previous research in which the news media coverage of female candidates was more negative compared with male candidates (Falk, 2008; Heldman et al., 2005; Jalalzai, 2006; Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991; Scharrer, 2002). The implication here is that negative coverage may influence voters’ evaluations of female governors, which can impact job approval ratings, future legislative initiatives, and endeavors beyond the governorship.
The frames used in the coverage of male and female governors were another indicator of the quality of coverage. Since most of the articles in this study were news articles with a more neutral, balanced tone, it follows that the majority of paragraphs were framed to focus on the issues facing the governor. Journalists frequently described the governors using this frame because one of the roles of journalism is to inform the public of the actions of politicians in office. However, this study found that the news media used fewer issue frames when covering female governors. These results comport with previous research that has found that female political candidates receive less issue coverage than males (Aday & Devitt; Devitt, 2002; Kahn, 1993; Kahn, 1994; Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991).

However, even though issue frames were used more frequently for males than females, the types of issues discussed did not fall along stereotypical gender lines. Previous research has found that issue frames for female candidates usually focused on stereotypically feminine issues like education, welfare, health care, poverty, and the environment as opposed to such masculine issues as the economy, defense, energy, and foreign affairs (Banwart et al., 2003; Bode & Hennings, 2012; Carroll & Schreiber, 1997; Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991). The results from this study do not support past research findings. The coverage of male governors discussed both stereotypical masculine and feminine issues, whereas the coverage of female governors was more likely to discuss stereotypical masculine and gender-neutral issues. This finding suggests that as female candidates transition into office, journalists portray these women as working on the issues that are pressing to their state at the time of their tenure rather than stereotypical feminine issues.
Unlike issue frames that were used more frequently for male governors, personal, gendered, and strategy frames were used more in the coverage of female governors. Previous research has found that the coverage of female candidates was more likely to contain personal frames (Aday & Devitt, 2001; Anderson, 2002; Banwart et al., 2003; Bode & Hennings, 2012; Bystrom et al., 2001; Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Devitt, 2002; Falk, 2008; Heldman et al., 2005; Scharrer, 2002) and strategy frames that often focused on viability discussions (Falk, 2008; Heldman et al., 2005; Jalalzai, 2006; Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991; Scharrer, 2002). The findings from this study expand on previous research to show that journalists carry some of their habits of covering female candidates into their coverage of female politicians.

In addition, the news coverage of female governors was more likely to contain gendered frames. One of the ways in which gender was framed in the news coverage of female governors was through references to leadership breakthroughs. The “first female” frame was just as likely to be used for governors who had assumed office 10 years ago as those who did so more recently. This suggests that even though more and more women are being elected to high ranking political positions, the frequency in which these references occurred indicates the “first female” frame is still newsworthy. It is important to note that leadership breakthroughs were not discussed for men. Since male officeholders are the political norm, there was nothing newsworthy in another male being elected to the position of governor.

Included in leadership breakthroughs were discussions of female governors overcoming gender bias and making progress in the male dominated political world. Because of this, these women were often described as role models for other women and
young girls. Despite the progress women have made in the political world, discussions of progress were still newsworthy as evident from their frequency. Again, these types of discussions were not found in the coverage of male governors. Since white males are the norm in politics, there is no progress to be made or obstacles to overcome. It is interesting to note that there were also no discussions of male politicians being role models for other males. One could imagine that the chief executive officer of the state would be a strong role model for young boys and men, but this was never discussed in their coverage.

Another way in which gendered frames were used was through the use of words that highlighted the gender of the politician. Words like broad, lady, girl, and skirt were used in place of woman. These words are a disrespectful way of referring to a woman, and ironically, were sometimes used by female governors to describe themselves. The most frequently occurring word used in the news article coverage of female governors was lady. According to Lakoff (1973), the term lady was originally used in conjunction with gentleman and addressed women of high social status. The word recalls a time of chivalry and politeness. However, lady also suggests helplessness in that a lady cannot do things for herself. In instances when lady is used to refer to a woman in a job, the more demeaning the job, the more likely lady is used. In the context of a female governor, using lady as a substitute for woman undermines her authority and power and is a more trivial and derogatory way to describe her. In addition, using words like broad, girl, and skirt instead of woman shows a lack of respect and seriousness for these high ranking officials.

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4 This study did not examine race as there were only two non-white male governors and one non-white female governor in the sample. This is addressed in Chapter 6 as a direction for future research.
Guy was the most frequently used gender qualifier for male governors. The word *guy* is slang for a male human being (Clancy, 1999). However, *guy* has a different connotation than *lady*. The word *guy* is often applied to any male from football players to the president of the United States and has become a common substitute for *man* (Clancy, 1999). *Guy* lacks the type of trivialization found in the term *lady*.

Another word used in the coverage of male governors that highlighted their gender was *boy*. However, the term *boy* had a different meaning than its counterpart, *girl*. When *girl* was used for female governors, it had a derogatory meaning, showing a lack of respect or seriousness for the governor. *Boy* was used in conjunction with *good ol’* and *country* and referred to Governors Barbour and Perdue who are from rural and Southern states. Using the word in this way was indicative of where the governor was from rather than a sign of disrespect. Even though the coverage of male governors included words that highlighted their gender such as *boy* and *guy*, these instances were infrequent. The coverage of female governors was much more likely to contain words other than *woman* to highlight gender. In addition, there was a broader array of these words, and the words were much more likely to be disrespectful because of the derogatory meanings associated with them.

A final way in which gendered frames were used was through the activation of gender stereotypes. This was most frequently done by framing female governors in their roles as mothers, grandmothers, and wives. This is consistent with previous research on female candidates that found that the coverage of these women was more likely to discuss their family life including being mothers and wives (Banwart et al., 2003; Bode & Hennings, 2012; Bystrom et al., 2001; Carlin & Winfrey, 2009; Falk, 2008). Compared
with female governors, traditional gendered roles were rarely mentioned for male governors even though most were married with children.

It is important to note that gendered coverage was not equally distributed across the female sample. One reason some women received more gendered coverage than others was because of their personal lives. For example, gendered frames were used frequently for Governors Palin and Walker because they occupied the traditional feminine roles of wife, mother, and grandmother. Governor Palin was married and had four children before she was elected. In addition, she was pregnant and gave birth to her fifth child and had a grandchild while in office. Governor Walker was married, had seven children, 25 grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. In contrast, Governors Napolitano and Lingle received less gendered coverage because they were not married during their tenure as governor and did not have any children. Obviously, the news media could not frame the coverage of these women along gender roles they did not occupy. It is important to note that there was no coverage of Governors Napolitano and Lingle not being married or not being mothers. One might expect that if a female governor did not occupy the traditional gender roles of wife and mother, the news media would find this newsworthy. The fact that they did not is an indication that gender biased coverage may be becoming less biased. However, even though some women received less gendered coverage than others, the fact that gender roles were discussed at all for female governors and not for males is indicative of gender bias.

The second reason some female governors received less gendered coverage than others was because these women were in fact not the first female governors of their state. Governors Sebelius and Rell were the second women to occupy the position, Governor
Napolitano was the third, and Governor Brewer was the fourth in her state. The news media did not use a “first female” lens, discuss their progress in the male dominated political world, or being role models because they were not the first women to break through the political glass ceiling. The fact that these women received less gendered coverage because they were not the first female governor implies that this type of coverage may eventually decline. As more and more states elect female governors, the “first female” frame along with discussions of women’s progress will no longer be relevant or newsworthy.

Unlike previous research that only focused on the beginning of politicians’ terms in office (Carroll & Schreiber, 1997; Dabbous & Ladley, 2010; Norris, 1997), this study examined the entire governorship and found that differences exist in the tone and frames used in news articles for male and female governors during the transition periods of their tenure. As female governors transitioned into their position as governor, their coverage was more likely to contain gendered, personal and strategy frames, whereas the coverage of male governors was more issue focused. These findings have important implications for female governors because the governor-elect time period is a crucial time for the public to get to know the new governor. The public and news media pay particular attention to the governor-elect following Election Day or the announcement that a predecessor is resigning to learn about the new governor’s future legislative agenda. My findings suggest that citizens of states with female governors are likely to learn less about the issue stances of these women and their future legislative agendas than citizens of states with male governors. Right from the beginning of their tenure, the relationship between female governors and their constituents is disadvantaged because the news
media uses personal, strategy, and gendered frames more than issue coverage. The public simply does not receive the same type of information about these women that they do for male governors. Since all eyes are on these women during this initial coverage, this could have important consequences for their future goals if the public does not receive the more relevant issue focused information. More non-issue coverage could negatively impact job approval ratings, the success of legislative agendas, and future political endeavors.

However, despite the evidence of gender biased coverage during the governor-elect period, the differences in the coverage of males and females appear to converge during their term. Even though males continue to receive more issue coverage during their term and females continue to receive more personal and gendered coverage, the differences were not as great as they were during the governor-elect period, and they received the same amount of strategy coverage. These finding suggest that after these women were inaugurated into office, their coverage became more focused on their policy positions and legislative agendas than on their gender or personal backgrounds.

Likewise the coverage of female governors during their re-election campaigns further supports this trend. Even though female governors received more gendered and strategy coverage during their re-election campaign which supports previous research on candidates (Aday & Devitt, 2001; Banwart et al., 2003; Bode & Hennings, 2012; Devitt, 2002; Heldman et al., 2005; Kahn, 1994b; Scharrer, 2002), they also received more issue coverage and less personal coverage than males which contradicts prior research. The most likely explanation for these contradictory findings is that previous research focused more on female candidates who were challengers and open-seat candidates rather than
incumbents. This was likely the focus simply because there were no or few incumbent women to study in any one election year. I found more issue and less personal frames because female incumbents are already known to the electorate so there is less of a need to provide coverage about their personal backgrounds.

Finally, the frames and tone used during the lame duck period were reminiscent of the governor-elect time period. The coverage of female governors during this time was more likely to contain gendered and strategy coverage, less likely to contain issue discussions, and more likely to be non-neutral. Again, like the governor-elect period, the differences in coverage during their final days in office have important implications for female governors. Compared with male governors, coverage of these women was more likely to focus on gendered discussions and their future career plans rather than their legislative agendas. Therefore, citizens in states with female governors learn less about these women in relation to how they handled specific state issues than citizens in states with male governors. If the public knows less about the issues these women tackled in office and is exposed to more gendered coverage as they leave, the public may view these outgoing female governors as less influential political players which could impact their success in seeking future political endeavors such as a higher political office.

Overall, the findings from this study suggest there are important differences in the coverage of male and female governors. Many of the differences between male and females were substantively small, but statistically significant due to the large sample size. However, there were several substantively large differences that are worth noting. The largest differences found between the coverage of male and female governors were in the use of personal frames and the frames used during the governor-elect and lame duck
transition periods. In terms of personal frames, the coverage of female governors was much more likely to contain references to their personality (21.8% vs. 13.9%) and the coverage of male governors was much more likely to discuss their qualifications (23.9% vs. 16%). These findings indicate that journalists are more likely to focus on professional content for male governors that directly relates to their ability to govern, whereas journalists are more likely to focus on personal content for female governors that is less tied to their position as governor. These results support the gendered mediation thesis in that the coverage of female candidates was more likely to emphasize the personal, whereas the coverage of male governors was more likely to emphasize the professional.

The other significant difference found in the coverage of male and female governors was during the beginning and end of their tenures. The coverage of male governors was much more likely to contain issue frames during the governor-elect period (61% vs. 39.7%), whereas the coverage of female governors was much more likely to contain personal (14.4% vs. 9.7%), strategy (24.6% vs. 13%), and gendered frames (4.6% vs. 0.06%). In addition, the coverage of male governors was much more likely to contain issue discussions during the lame duck transition period (60.7% vs. 48.8%) than for female governors. These findings suggest that both at the beginning and end of their tenure, female governors receive substantially less issue coverage than their male counterparts which ultimately impacts what the public knows about the accomplishments of these women.

Despite evidence of gender bias, it is important to recognize that the majority of coverage for both male and female governors was neutral with predominantly issue-framed discussions. These two aspects of news media coverage are ideal for creating a
knowledgeable public. Issue coverage allows citizens to learn about the legislative agendas of elected officials and neutral coverage enables citizens to form their own unbiased opinions of these leaders. However, the news coverage of governors did not always follow these prescribed journalistic standards. When the news coverage strayed from these ideals, female governors were the ones targeted.

This has significant political and societal implications. In terms of political implications, the consequence of less issue coverage and more gendered, personal, and strategy coverage is that citizens of states with female governors learn less about the legislative accomplishments of these women and more about aspects of these women that are inconsequential to their ability to govern. This gender biased coverage can influence voter assessments, which can impact the future careers of female politicians. Previous research has shown that gender bias in the coverage of female candidates can lead voters to form different evaluations of male and female candidates and thus negatively impact the viability and electoral success of female candidates (Huddy and Terkildsen, 1993; Kahn, 1992; Kropf and Boiney, 2001). Since male and female governors received differential treatment with women receiving less overall news coverage, less prominently placed coverage, and more gendered and personal coverage, then it is likely that voters could question the competency of female governors more so than males and this could be reflected in election outcomes. However, since incumbents have a greater chance of winning elections than challengers or open-seat candidates (Falk, 2008; Kahn, 1992), gender biased coverage may play less of a role on electoral success and viability for female governors than for non-incumbent female candidates. As evidence of this, all the female governors in this study that ran for re-election won. Therefore, it is possible that
the gender biased they encountered in the news media was not significant enough to affect their re-election outcomes. Their status as an incumbent likely played more of a pivotal role than any gender bias they encountered.

However, instead of re-election outcomes, what is perhaps a more likely consequence of gender biased coverage relates to future political endeavors. Of the six governors in this study who did not run for re-election, five of them were females. The one male, Governor Warner, could not run for a second term due to term limits. Governor Walker failed to receive her party’s nomination; Governors Swift, Blanco, and Perdue chose not to run for re-election; and Governor Palin resigned from her position as governor. In addition to not running for a second term, none of these women sought another elected political position after their governorship ended. Instead of impacting re-election outcomes, it is possible that gender biased news media coverage creates a climate that makes it more difficult for female governors to lead, making their job more difficult, and running for re-election or other elected political positions less appealing. Biased coverage could lead to negative voter assessments and low job approval ratings, which could make these women question how successful they might be in seeking a second term. The gender biased coverage these women received may simply limit their desire to compete in the male dominated political sphere. Since female governors may be less likely to pursue other elected positions, this could explain why few women seek and win higher political office such as the presidency, as the Office of the Governor is often a stepping stone to the presidency.

In terms of societal implications, the results from this study raise important considerations for how gender roles and cultural stereotypes are used in our society.
Women’s increased political presence could be cited as evidence that gender stereotypes have changed in America. This is supported by the fact that the majority of news coverage surrounding female governors was unbiased, neutral, and issue focused. Also, the coverage of the types of issues did not fall along stereotypical gender lines, and some female governors received comparably little gendered coverage. In addition, one could argue that rather than indicating gender bias, some of the results from this study simply show that the news media is covering newsworthy and unique aspects of female governors that just so happen to fall along gender lines. For example, Governor Palin and Governor Swift were pregnant while in office and this was discussed in their coverage. It is possible that these types of discussions occurred not because of an inherent gender bias in news media coverage, but because some activities of female governors happened to be out of the ordinary and, therefore, newsworthy topics.

However, other findings from this study simply cannot be attributed to newsworthiness. For example, since female governors were found to receive less overall coverage, less prominently placed coverage, and more negative coverage, gender biased coverage cannot be mistaken for newsworthiness. The results of this study indicate that the news media activated gender roles, discussed appearance and personality, and wrote more opinionated articles for female governors than their male counterparts. It would appear that even though women are winning races and occupying positions that have been traditionally male dominated, cultural stereotypes about the role of women are still prevalent and appear in the news coverage of female governors. When female chief executives officers of the state are compared to June Cleaver, Gidget, Aunt Bea, and
Britney Spears, one questions how much gender stereotypes are really changing in America.
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Up until now, the majority of research on disparities in the news media coverage of politicians has focused upon male and female candidates with little scholarly attention devoted to their transitions into office. This lack of attention implies that news coverage leading up to Election Day is more interesting than what happens after. However, the results from this study indicate that what happens after Election Day is equally relevant to understanding the dynamic relationship between the news media and our politicians. Previous research suggests that the news media presents obstacles for women while running for political office, and based upon my results, it is clear that these barriers are not entirely removed once in office.

This research was one of the first of its kind for several reasons. First, unlike the majority of previous research, I analyzed male and female politicians that have made the transition into political office rather than male and female candidates. Second, their entire tenure as governor was examined rather than just the beginning of their term. Third, I analyzed a large sample of governors, 15 male and 15 female, over a 10 year period. Finally, compared with previous research, this study coded a large volume of paragraphs, just over 70,000, in order to more fully understand news media coverage.

Despite the unique aspects of this research, several limitations were encountered. First, I did not analyze any articles from wire services because I used digital news archives. One limitation with using digital news archives is that news content from wire services that appear in both the print and online versions of newspapers is removed from the newspaper before it is archived (Weaver & Bimber, 2008). A search of any newspaper in a digital news archive would not contain wire stories. I was originally going to conduct a separate content analysis of Associated Press (AP)-produced stories to
account for this missing content as suggested by Weaver and Bimber (2008). However, after drawing this sample, I would have had an additional 1,100 articles to code and these articles appeared to be nearly identical to those found in the individual newspapers. Even though this study sought to examine all news stories that reach the public including wire-originated ones, because of the duplication in content and because of the large volume of additional coding, AP stories were not included in this study.

The second limitation was that the full essence of tone could not be captured because of the sheer volume of coding. My initial plan was to code the overall tone of each article, the tone of the title of the article, and the tone of each paragraph. However, because of time constraints, I chose to only examine tone at the level of the paragraph. As a result, some instances of tone as it relates to the level of the article were not captured. This is best illustrated through an example. In an article about Governor Brewer’s proposal to offer raises to state employees who give up job protection, the journalist first described the proposal, and then quoted various employees who were not willing to give up the protections (“Brewer job plan”, 2012). These quotes expressed a negative tone towards the proposal which was earlier linked to Governor Brewer, but because these paragraphs didn’t specifically mention her, they were not coded as being about the governor and, therefore, were not coded as having a negative tone. Despite this limitation, I believe that capturing tone at the level of the paragraph is still the better measure because it is a more accurate indicator of how tone is used in news coverage. Since many articles have some degree of both negative and positive tone, the percentage of articles that would be coded as having both would be inflated.
A third limitation of this study was the other frame category. If a paragraph was not an issue, personal, strategy, or gendered frame, it was coded as other. Of all the paragraphs written about both male and female governors, 14% were coded as other. This was the second most frequently occurring type of frame for the entire sample. Paragraphs that were coded as other contained a wide variety of topics ranging from discussions of inaugural activities, to the overall political climate in America, to future book deals. Because this category made up a substantial proportion of the frames, in hindsight, it would have been useful to create another coding category that captured the types of other frames discussed similar to what I did for issue and personal frames. By doing this, I could have determined if differences existed in the coverage of male and female governors in terms of topics not related to issue, personal, strategy or gendered discussions.

A final limitation of this study was only focusing on print news coverage. I chose to focus on print news because it offers the public a much more detailed account of political news compared with local television coverage. However, it is possible that an entirely different picture would emerge had I coded the broadcast news of the local TV stations in each governor’s state capital.

Regardless of these limitations, the findings from this study clearly suggest that the news media covers male and female governors differently and have done so consistently for the past 10 years. These findings raise important questions for future research. First, do differences exist in the news media coverage of other elected officials? I chose to examine governors because they occupy a high profile position that attracts public attention, receives considerable news coverage, and is often a stepping
stone to the presidency. Future research could examine the news media coverage surrounding other politicians in office such as those elected to the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives to see if gendered news coverage exists. It is possible that the coverage of females in Congress is less gendered than the coverage of female governors. Delaware, Iowa, Mississippi, and Vermont are the only states that have never sent a woman to either the U.S. Senate or U.S. House (NWPC, n.d.). In contrast, 24 states have never had a female governor. Clearly more states have had female representation in Congress than female governors. As a result, there may be less evidence of gender biased coverage of females in Congress because the news media and the public are more accepting of women occupying these positions. However, even though more women have occupied congressional positions, it is also possible that the coverage of these women is more gendered than the coverage of female governors because of differences in issue domains. Governors have typically been associated with statewide issues like education and health that play to the stereotypical strengths of females, whereas U.S. Senators deal with foreign policy and national security issues, which have been considered strengths of male politicians (Kahn, 1994b). As a result, female senators may be viewed as less competent because they deal with stereotypical masculine issues and, therefore, may receive more gender biased coverage than either their male counterparts or female governors.

A second question that arose from this research is how does gender biased coverage affect voters? The findings from this study suggest that differences do exist in the news media coverage of male and female governors, but little is known about how these differences impact voters. The majority of the coverage was neutral with
predominantly issue frame discussions. The patterns of gender biased coverage that were found were often subtle and may not be easily detected by the average citizen. Future research could determine if these subtle patterns of gender bias actually do influence voters’ evaluations of elected officials and if they do, in what capacity.

In addition to examining how gender biased coverage affects voters, a third question is how does this coverage impact female politicians? Does gender biased coverage influence the likelihood these women will run for re-election or higher office? Of the male and female governors in this study, more women than men chose not to run for another term and these women did not seek another political office after their tenure ended. How much of this decision was based upon the news media coverage they received? One would expect a variety of factors went into their decision not to run or pursue another elected position. However, future research could directly examine these reasons to see why women are not seeking higher political offices.

A fourth direction for future research would be to examine the discourse of female politicians. Do female governors contribute to the gender biased coverage they receive through their own discourse and self-representations? This study uncovered several instances in which some of the gendered frames used in the coverage of female governors were found within the governors’ own discourse. For example, female governors were quoted using words and phrases that highlighted their gender such as broad, lady, girl, and skirt, all of which have a derogatory meaning associated with them. Future research could examine the extent to which female governors participate in their own gendered coverage.
A final question that arose from this study is if race is treated the same way as gender in the coverage of our elected politicians? This study did not attempt to examine race as the only non-white politicians were Governors Patrick, Richardson, and Martinez. However, with a larger sample size, future studies could analyze if the coverage of race follows a similar pattern as gender. Are “first Hispanic” frames and race stereotypes used in the coverage of non-white politicians, and if so, are they used to the same extent as gender frames are for female politicians? It is likely that race references frequently occur in the coverage of non-white politicians because, like female politicians, they are a novelty in the white, male dominated political sphere. Future research could determine how race is framed and for non-white female politicians, how gender and race frames are used together in news media coverage.

Overall, my findings suggest that the majority of coverage for both male and females was neutral coverage that focused on issue discussions. There is some indication that the news media coverage of female governors was less gender biased than the coverage of female politicians in previous research. For example, the types of issues discussed for females did not fall along stereotypical gender lines and some female governors received comparably little gendered coverage. However, when the coverage strayed from the prescribed journalistic standards, the recipients of this coverage were predominantly female governors. Female governors received less news article coverage, and less prominently placed coverage. In addition, the coverage of female governors was more likely to be non-neutral, and more likely to contain gendered, strategy and personal frames than the coverage of male governors. As one journalist from the Salt Lake Tribune wrote:
I wish we were the highly evolved species I dream about, and that singling out good politicians by gender wouldn't matter anymore. "First women" stories should be an archaeological relic by now, but they are not. Gender in politics still matters. (Mullen, 2004)

Nearly 10 years have passed since this comment was written, and it appears that gender balanced news media coverage has yet to be fully achieved.
Appendix: News Media Coverage Codebook

ARTICLE CODING

1. Name of politician

2. Sex of politician
   1=Male
   2=Female

3. Party affiliation of politician
   1=Republican
   2=Democrat

4. Name of newspaper

5. Date of article (Month/Day/Year)

6. Year of article
   0=2000
   1=2001
   2=2002
   3=2003
   4=2004
   5=2005
   6=2006
   7=2007
   8=2008
   9=2009
   10=2010
   11=2011
   12=2012
   13=2013

7. Section
   1=National/Main/News/A
   2=Local/News-Local/Metro/State/B
   3=Business/C
   4=Politics
   5=Sports
6=Entertainment/Life/Style/Living
7=Opinion/Editorial/Viewpoints/Perspective
8= Other
9= None listed

8. Sex of author
1=Male
2=Female
3=Joint authors (male and female)
4=Cannot be determined
5=No author listed

9. Type of article
1=News Story
2=Opinion Column (article presenting the opinion of a journalist)
3=Editorial (article presenting the opinion of the publisher or editorial staff, either there is no author indicated or “by editorial board” is written)

10. Transition periods
1=Governor-elect (post-election and pre-inauguration)
   This time period begins the day after the election and ends the day before the governor is inaugurated into office. The governor is often described as “governor-elect” during this time period.

2=Term
   This time period begins the day the governor is inaugurated into office and ends at the beginning of the campaign season. The campaign season begins on the day the governor announces his or her intentions to run for another term. The “term” time period begins again immediately following the re-election of the governor until the election of his or her successor.

3=Campaign
   The campaign season begins on the day the governor announces he or she will run for another term in office and ends on Election Day or the day the governor fails to receive his or her party’s nomination.
4=Lame duck (post-election, pre-inauguration of successor)
The lame duck time period begins the day after Election Day in which the
governor either lost the election or in the case that he or she did not run, a
successor was declared. The lame duck period also begins on the day the
governor announces his or her resignation to take another position and
ends on his or her last day in office.

5=Recount
This time period begins the day after the election and ends once a recount
vote is decided. This category applies only to Governors Mark Dayton
and Christine Gregoire who were involved in a recount vote following
Election Day.

6=Governor in waiting
This time period begins the day the predecessor announces his or her
resignation and ends the day before the governor is inaugurated into
office. The governor is usually the lieutenant governor and succeeds the
governor who resigns. This category applies to Governors Jan Brewer,
Dave Heineman, Gary Herbert, Joe Kernan, Sean Parnell, Jodi Rell, Jane
Swift and Olene Walker.

7=Campaign for national office
This time period applies only to Governor Sarah Palin when she
campaigned for vice president and Governor Bill Richardson when he
campaigned for president. The time period for Governor Palin begins on
the day she was announced as the 2008 vice presidential nominee and ends
on the day after the election. The time period for Governor Richardson
begins on the day he announced his 2008 presidential campaign and ends
on the day he withdrew from the race.
PARAGRAPH CODING

This study defines each paragraph as a frame. You will be coding only those paragraphs that mention the governor.

1. About governor

   1= Paragraph mentions governor
   
   Paragraphs that are about the governor will state his or her name, will use a pronoun in place of his or her name or say “governor.” These paragraphs will describe the governor, discuss his or her actions, or quote the governor. Paragraphs that contain phrases such as “the governor’s staff” or “the governor’s administration” should all be coded as mentioning the governor. Paragraphs that only say “administration” should not be coded. Paragraphs that talk about multiple “governors” with no specific mention of the current governor should be coded as being about the governor if the content of the paragraph applies to the current governor’s administration.

   0= Paragraph is not about governor
   
   If the paragraph is not about the governor, place a 0 in the remaining categories and do not code further. Paragraphs that are about members of the governor’s family, including spouses, should not be coded as being about the governor unless the family member is describing the governor or his or her actions.

2. Tone of paragraph

   The tone of the paragraph is the attitude that is conveyed specifically about the governor. Only consider tone as it relates to how the governor is being described. If the paragraph is a direct quote from a governor, do not consider this as having tone as these quotes will most often be self-serving.

   1=Positive
   
   Example: The big risk, of course, is that the state could spend too much time pursuing non-viable options. But Palin is enthusiastic and intelligent. It would seem unlike her to allow discussions to bog down or blind alleys to be followed very long.

   2=Negative or critical
   
   Example: The unfolding catastrophe sent Blanco reeling. She despaired, while the world watched. She failed to ask for the right type of help the right way. When the time came to appoint a rebuilding commission and
craft a legislative agenda to deal with the new reality, she dallied. She came across as at once paralyzed and desperate.

3=Positive and negative
   Example: Gov. Jim Doyle's state budget proposal isn't a mess or a success.

4=Neutral or factual
   Example: Gov. Joe Kernan laid out a new health care insurance initiative aimed at small businesses struggling to find affordable coverage for their employees.

3. Frames

Determine if the paragraph describing the politician is an issue frame, a personal frame, a strategy frame, a gendered frame, contains multiple frames, or is none of the above (“other”). If the frame contains multiple frames, specifically indicate which ones.

1=Issue
2=Personal
3=Strategy
4=Gendered
5=Multiple
6=Other

1=Issue frame

Issue frames discuss proposals or actions while in office and on the campaign trail. These include proposals such as pending legislation, public policy positions, and campaign platforms as well as specific actions such as executive orders, legislative vetoes, and governmental appointments. Issue frames also include public appearances, meetings with constituents, speeches delivered to various groups, and state of the state addresses.

When coding an issue frame, indicate which of the below issues are being discussed. If there are multiple issues discussed, indicate each issue on the coding spreadsheet. In some cases, multiple facets of an issue will be mentioned in one paragraph. Code for each of the issues mentioned. For
example, a paragraph about health care might mention how a health care proposal could create more jobs and influence the state’s economy. This should be coded as both health care and economy.

In many cases, the context of the paragraph will not be clear unless you refer to previous paragraphs. In this situation, you must carry the code from the previous paragraphs. For example, in order to code the following paragraph, you must consider the previous paragraphs and carry the codes from those paragraphs: “Blanco said Barbour told her, "I didn’t mean to throw you a curve ball.”

Note: The governance category will likely be applied when there is a general discussion of a governor’s duties such as public appearances or staff appointments with NO mention of a specific issue. These are general statements about governing that do not specifically refer to any of the below issues. If a specific issue is mentioned, code for that issue rather than governance.

1=Construction and development (including residential and community projects, housing related issues, vouchers and rebuilding)
2=Crime and criminal matters (including law enforcement, school violence, murder rates, illegal drugs, prisons, rape, domestic violence, terrorism, drunk driving, child abuse, drug trafficking, prosecutors/prosecution, homeland security, pardons)
3=Economy (including the state budget, jobs, wages, taxes, tax credits, economic development, small businesses, bailouts, minimum wage, unemployment, insurance issues, investments, unions, city and county government aid, state government shutdown, state worker issues-pay raises, pay cuts, layoffs, etc.)
4=Education (including preschool, K-12, college and university, tuition, Board of Regents, financial aid)
5=Elections (including campaign finance reform, special elections, redistricting, bills concerning candidates, voter ID issues, referendums)
6=Energy (including electricity, heating, nuclear, renewable energy, solar, oil, gas, off-shore drilling, coal)
7=Environment (including climate change, going green, coastal restoration, levees, pollution, land conservation, water distribution/rationing)
8=Health care (including health insurance, hospitals, medical care, Medicaid, Medicare, prescription drugs, medicinal marijuana, mental health, junk food, tobacco, contraception coverage)
9=Immigration (including illegal immigration, border security, undocumented immigrants)
10=Military (including military spending, Air National Guard, veterans, war, military families, military bases)
11=Natural disasters (including hurricanes, earthquakes, tornados, snowstorms, flooding, wildfires, droughts)
12=Public safety (including consumer products, child booster seats)
13=Social issues (including moral and family values, abortion, gay marriage, sexual orientation, adoption, stem cell research, racial issues, gun ownership, gun control, religion, women’s equality, “women’s issues”)
14=Tourism and recreation (including both U.S. and international outreach efforts, state parks, gaming, hunting, gambling, sporting events, sports teams, museums, lottery, state fair, zoos)
15=Trade (including foreign and domestic trade)
16=Transportation (including DMV, roads, highways, airlines, tunnels, infrastructure, waterways, electronic billboards, ports, tolls, drivers’ licenses, trains)
17=Governance (including general statements about governing such as staff appointments, legislative sessions, state of the state addresses, meetings with political and business leaders, legislative vetoes, passing bills, signing bills, communication with constituents, staff issues including behavior of staff)
18=Other (ex. information technology, government reform, volunteering, Indian issues, intellectual property, government transparency, natural resources)
19=Judicial systems, states’ rights, civil litigation (including combining court systems, caps on civil jury trial awards, suing the states, federal intervention in state affairs, legality of governor’s actions, state Supreme Court, state constitution, Attorney General, tort reform, jury duty)
20=Welfare and social services (including child welfare, poor, homeless, mentally ill, elderly)
21=Ethical issues (related to the Governor or other state officials, including using state resources for personal/political use, potential conflicts of interest and appearances of impropriety)
22= Agriculture (crops, weather conditions that affect production, price supports)

Example 1: Brewer’s choice of attorney and lobbyist Greg Patterson for an Arizona Board of Regents seat has caused more controversy than usual for an appointment to the 12-member board. (Education)

Example 2: Gov. Jim Doyle will consider a Republican plan to open military-style prison boot camps as a way to possibly save money and return Wisconsin prisoners being held out of state, Doyle spokesman Thad Nation said Tuesday. (Crime)
Example 3: Speaking to about 300 people at the Hilton Phoenix East/Mesa hotel, Brewer for the most part echoed themes she struck in Monday's State of the State speech as the Legislature began this year's work. (Governance)

Example 4: The Republican governor this afternoon is expected to tout her administration's accomplishments — namely reining in state spending — during a 30-minute speech before a crowd of several hundred people. (Economy and Governance)

Example 5: To help those serving in the military, Blanco also will press for legislation that will give taxpayers the option of checking a box on their state income tax returns to donate to a support fund for those in the Louisiana National Guard. (Economy and Military)

2=Personal frame

Personal frames are concerned with aspects of the politicians as individuals including their personal or professional backgrounds. These include references to their personality/demeanor, speaking style, family, marital status, age, qualifications/experience, background or appearance. When coding a personal frame, indicate which of the below type(s) are being discussed.

1=Appearance - references to politician’s physical attributes (hair style, height, weight, eye color, skin tone) or attire.

2=Family – references to the politician’s children, parents, or other relatives. This does not include references to spouses. Any references to a politician’s spouse falls under the “marital status” category. Please note that if the newspaper simply references the politician being a mother, father, grandmother, etc. with no further elaboration, this would be considered a gendered role and would be coded as a gendered frame. If the newspaper describes the governor’s children or grandchildren, the paragraph would be coded as a personal frame with a family subtype.

Example: Gov. Jan Brewer's role in the collection of her son's Social Security benefits was under investigation for more than a year by federal authorities trying to determine if about $75,000 in benefits was improperly paid on behalf of her son.
3=Marital status – references to the politician’s current or former spouse, or noting if the politician is single, also references to husband being the “first man.”

4=Personality/character traits/demeanor – any reference to the politician’s behavior, personality, character traits, demeanor, speaking style, or emotions such as crying.

Example: "She was so nice," DeGoede said of the governor. "She invited me up to her office to see where it was placed. (That's when) I asked her if they had an official oil painting."

Example: So Olene Walker has tried all the tricks -- rolling her eyes, curling her toes and pursing her lips -- to keep the tears in check.

5=Background – any reference to the politician’s race, ethnicity, upbringing, or hometown.

Example: Granholm told reporters after her speech: "I'm feeling great. Here I am a child of immigrants who five years ago you all didn't know who I was. I used to joke that I was a no-name, nobody from nowhere, never before elected with no money. Well, here I stand as the 47th governor of the state of Michigan. What a message that sends to our young people."

6=Qualifications/ job experience – descriptions of the politicians professional training, including previous jobs and professional accomplishments. This category applies to jobs and accomplishments that directly relate to the role of governor.

Example: "As a former prosecutor and attorney general, I've fought my whole career to clean up corruption and I won't stop now," Doyle says. Prior to being elected governor in 2002, Doyle spent 12 years as state attorney general and six years as Dane County District Attorney.

7=Age – mentions of the politician’s age or generation.

8=Other – personal references that don’t fit into any of the above categories. This could include discussions of their likes and dislikes as individuals that are not related to their position as governor. Any discussions of a governor’s wealth or personal assets or reference to the governor’s health should be coded as other.
Example: In the meantime, she said, she plans to enjoy some of the spoils of the office, including her suite at the Superdome, site of the Sugar Bowl and the BCS national championship game, the latter matchup featuring the LSU Tigers.

Example: Before signing the trade memorandum, Blanco attended Mass Wednesday morning at La Iglesia de la Merced, an Old Havana church dating to 1755. The service was conducted by the Rev. Gilberto Walker, a priest in the Vincentians order whose family roots are in both New Orleans and Cuba and who once served in a Baton Rouge parish.

9=Pregnancy – discussions of a governor being pregnant while in office. This category applies to Governors Sarah Palin and Jane Swift.

3=Strategy frame

Strategy frames are commonly used during campaigns. These frames are referred to as horse-race descriptions as they focus on the tactics and strategies of the candidates and who’s winning and losing rather than providing information on where candidates stand on issues. Therefore, strategy frames do little to inform voters on the issues. These frames are concerned with who’s running, whether or not the candidate is ahead, the tactics the candidate uses to get votes, discussions of campaign finances and where the candidate campaigned. Strategy frames can also be used after the election to describe where the candidates received votes, the success or failure of their campaign strategies, and overall general assessments and summaries of the election results. Note: The strategy frame must be about the governor. If the governor is endorsing a political candidate or discussing a candidate’s viability, this is not a strategy frame. In addition, if the paragraph mentions the governor as an opponent but the focus of the paragraph is about the strategies used by the opponent rather than the governor, this is not a strategy frame and should be coded as an “other” frame. To be a strategy frame, the paragraph must include discussions of strategies as it relates to the governor.

Strategy frames are also used during non-campaign periods. In this case, they relate to job approval ratings and performance while in office. This includes how well the governor is succeeding in his or her role as governor and leader of the state, and the governor’s popularity (assessed by individuals as well as general statements about popularity and
likeability overall). Calls for resignation or impeachment are also considered strategy frames.

Strategy frames include discussions of what the governor is doing well and recommendations for how the governor could improve. These are general statements about how well the governor is doing and not tied to any issues. If an issue is mentioned, the paragraph should be coded as having an issue frame rather than a strategy frame. Note: The strategy frame, as it relates to discussions of what the governor should or should not be doing in office, must not be confused with the governance category under the issue frame. The governance category relates to discussions of general duties in office such as speeches and state of the state addresses, whereas the strategy frame relates to assessments of the governor’s performance.

Strategy frames are also used to discuss the governor’s long-term political viability. This includes references to whether the governor is seeking re-election or another political office.

Comments from pollsters and political science professors are usually an indication that a strategy frame is being used.

Strategy frames also include any campaigning, including appearances or fundraising that a governor does for politicians in his or her state.

Example 1: The effect of the changes on the governor's approval ratings and the economy won't be clear for some time, if ever. She could benefit from publicity when the state begins writing checks from the emerging sector fund. That won't happen until this summer at the earliest.

Example 2: The perception of Blanco as a leader overwhelmed by the unfolding events of Hurricane Katrina will likely be set in stone with people outside Louisiana, who will only remember the initial images on television, said Larry Sabato, a political scientist at the University of Virginia. But within the state, where people pay more attention to the day-to-day activities of a governor, she might be able to rehabilitate her image.

Example 3: The media's focus on Granholm as possibly the nation's next Supreme Court justice intensified Monday when it was learned she would be at the White House. Obama reportedly is considering her for the vacancy being left by retiring Justice David Souter.
Example 4: Or the lesson may be that Democrat Blanco should adopt a more partisan outlook in the face of the newly organized Republican delegation, as she hinted when she likened the atmosphere in Baton Rouge to Washington. If that's the case, Blanco's Republican committee chairs should be watching their backs.

4=Gendered frame

The gender frame brings notions of gender into the foreground. Please note that this frame can be used to describe both a female and male politician. This frame references leadership breakthroughs such as the governor being the “first female governor” or the “first woman governor” as well as describing the governor using specific gendered terms such as “woman,” “stateswoman,” “female,” “girl,” or “lady.”

The gender frame also applies to discussions about gendered roles that the governor occupies or has occupied in the past. These are roles that clearly have a gendered component to them. Look for such words as “housewife,” “wife,” “mother,” “grandmother,” “husband,” “father,” “grandfather,” or “breadwinner.”

Related to roles, the gender frame can also apply to analogies or comparisons that highlight the stereotypical role played by a man or woman. For example, the following paragraph highlights the role of a woman as a mother by comparing Governor Blanco’s legislative agenda to rocking a baby: "This is her baby to rock. She has to make it work.” Another example would be a male gubernatorial opponent offering the incumbent female governor his “Boy Scout hand to cross the street.”

The gender frame also applies to metaphors used to describe the governor that are usually used in conjunction with one gender such as war, fighting, and sports metaphors to describe men. In this case, the metaphor can be a stereotypical female or male metaphor applied to either a male or female governor. In the following examples, a female governor is being described in stereotypical male terms through the use of the word “quarterback” and the phrase “putting up your dukes”:

“I think it’s safe to say it hasn’t lived up to expectations,” Louisiana Secretary of Economic Development Michael Olivier said. "But I think we should take advantage of the fact the accord’s quarterback is now our governor to pursue all the opportunities it has.”
“At first, she was putting up her dukes to the Republican legislators, saying she wasn't going to let them decimate important government programs.”

In addition to roles and metaphors, adjectives are often used to describe the governor that can be considered stereotypical feminine or masculine. If an adjective is used that predominantly relates to one gender rather than the other, the paragraph would be considered as having a gendered frame. For example, a paragraph in which a female governor is described as “giddy” and “coy” would be considered as having a gendered frame.

Finally, the gender frame also references any obstacles these governors face directly related to their gender such as “gender bias” or “gender politics.”

Example 1: Said Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, who attended Granholm's victory party: "This is a situation where the girls are getting into the game. The game is always better when girls play."

Example 2: Some say she has carried unrealistic expectations as the first female governor, whom many saw as a whoosh of fresh air after 12 years of contentious rule by Republican John Engler.

Example 3: "My most important job on earth is to be a good husband for Denise, and a good father for Lauren and Kristen."

5=Multiple frame

Paragraphs that contain more than one frame should be coded as multiple. This includes any combination of issue, personal, strategy, and gendered frames. When coding a multiple frame, indicate which specific frames are being used.

Example 1: Much as she did in her two-year campaign to become Michigan's first female chief executive, Granholm didn't say much, but she sure looked good saying it. Long on style and short on substance, she decried again the projected $1.7-billion budget deficit left by the Engler administration and vowed to attack it with vigor. (Issue, Personal, Gendered)

Example 2: Other allies chafed at the notion that Blanco wasn't doing enough before. "I think this woman is spending every waking moment trying to identify ways to rebuild New Orleans," Rep. Karen Carter, D-
New Orleans, said. "I think she has been very open to new and creative ideas in the process." (Issue, Gendered)

6=Other frame

Paragraphs that are about the governor or mention the governor and are not an issue, personal, strategy or gendered frame should be coded as other. Paragraphs that discuss inaugural activities should be coded as other.

Example 1: Cindi Frederiksen, a 37-year-old pediatric nurse and mother of two from Chelsea, is voting for Granholm.

Example 2: Doyle was singled out in a top 10 list presented Tuesday night on the “Late Show with David Letterman.” The topic was “Top Ten Things Overheard at the Democratic National Convention.”

Example 3: After leaving office, Blanco said, she plans to write a book, which she said will include her "storm experiences" but not be dominated by them.
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